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# Learning Basic English

A PRACTICAL HANDBOOK

*for*

ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLE

*By* I. A. RICHARDS

*and*

CHRISTINE GIBSON



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A WARTIME BOOK

THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN CONFORMITY WITH  
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## CHAPTER ONE

# An Over-all View

FIRST, let us give you a short account of what Basic English is. Then, after saying what it is, we'll do our best to say what it isn't. We'll take up, one after another, the questions about Basic which are commonly put by those who haven't had much or any experience with it, by readers who maybe have seen something about it in the papers, but who haven't seen it at work in schoolrooms or gone into any of the 130 or so books on and in Basic which are in existence. There are a number of very strange ideas current—as to what Basic is, what it is for, and what its effects might be—and our chief purpose here is to put, if possible, a little grain or two of salt on the tails of some of these ideas or at least to make you readier—when you come across them—to take them with salt.

Basic is a system of everyday English words used in the regular forms of normal English. It is a selection of those English words which—taken together and used as we are all using them all the time—will among them do the most work. It is the smallest number of English words with a general enough covering power, among them, to let a man say *almost everything*—to say it well enough for his general day-to-day purposes in all the range of his interests however wide—in business, trade, industry, science, medical work—in all the arts of living and in all the exchanges of knowledge, belief, opinion, views, and news which a general-purpose language has to take care of.

Basic is a very small-scale language to have such a range of uses. It has only 850 head words in it. Putting on one side one point we'll be taking up later, these words go through all the changes of form which the same words in full, unlimited English go through. For example,

*take* is one of these Basic words. So we say in Basic: *I take, he takes, he is taking, he took, and it was taken* as in full English. So again we say *I, me, my, mine, we, us, our, ours*, and so on as in full English. There is nothing in good Basic which is against the rules of good English. If someone's attempts at Basic are bad English then they are by that very fact bad Basic. Naturally there is nothing about Basic to keep a man automatically from talking it badly or from writing bad Basic. But no more is there anything about complete unlimited English to keep a man automatically from talking bad English. Rules may be broken in Basic as in any other language. But the rules of Basic are far simpler than the rules of unlimited English. They were made as simple as possible—in the interests of the learner. But not by changing anything in English structure, only by *limiting* it. Parallel with and together with the selection of words for the Basic word list, Mr. Ogden made a selection of the forms of statements—the structure rules of Basic—with two ends in view: (1) to make Basic as clear and regular in structure as possible and so as little trouble to the learner as possible, and (2) to keep Basic a *normal* though limited form of English.

This last point is very important. Any limited form of a language which is not normal may well be a great danger to the mother tongue. Mr. Ogden and his helpers were fully conscious of this, and saw to it that there is nothing in Basic English which is not a normal part of the regular structure of English. The learner who goes on from Basic into more of English (as almost all do) has to make his ideas of English structure wider. He has to *do* more—but there is nothing that he has to *undo*.

In short, not every way of putting the Basic

words together gives you Basic—but only those ways which keep to the Basic rules.

This seems, however, to be starting off to say what Basic isn't! Let us go on a little longer with what Basic is.

A word or two on how it was worked out will make that clearer. We are all in agreement that some words are, in general, of more use than others—the word *do*, for example, is of more use than the word *extrapolate*. This is equally true with some words which have more or less the same sense: the word *make* is of more use than the words *fashion*, *fabricate*, *manufacture*, *contrive*, *constitute*, *produce*, and all the rest of the words you'll see under *make* in Roget's *Thesaurus*, say.

Well, Basic came about by taking that fact seriously—the fact that some words are of very much more use than others. Mr. Ogden and a very able group of helpers went on for seven years (1925–32) testing out the powers of English words in comparison with one another. The outcome was Basic. Naturally they had to take into account a very great number of things. Of use—for what, by whom, under what conditions? This is a very complex question, taking in not only what the English language does but what the other chief languages do. But the key question was this: *How far are the words in English able to take over one another's work?* The answer came by attempting for every English word to put what it might say in other words—the words on a limited list. That list became the Basic English list.

What is the language like which was the outcome of all this? It's like this. As no doubt some of our readers have been noting, we have been using nothing but Basic so far. This has all been in Basic. Is it so very unlike everyday, full, unlimited, complete English? We will go on a page or two more in Basic. Then we'll come out from Basic into a fuller form of our mother tongue. But first we'll go on and say a little more, *still* in Basic, on the reasons guiding the selection of the Basic word list. These words are not necessarily the most frequent words in English, though 500 of the 850 words of Basic are among the most frequent words

there are. All the Basic words which any teacher will be teaching first are very frequent. For example, the 10 most frequent words in English are *the*, *of*, *and*, *to*, *a*, *in*, *that*, *it*, *is*, *I*. (Among them, they make up a fourth part of all our reading.) Well, naturally enough all these words come very early in the teaching of Basic. But they don't come early because they are frequent. They come early because they are *necessary*, because they do so much work in the English language. And they are not necessary *because* they are frequent. That is putting the cart before the horse. It's the other way round. *These words are frequent because they are necessary*, because it's not possible to do very much without them. That is not to say that all frequently used words are necessary. Far from it.

First things first. Put the most necessary words and ways of saying things first—that is the chief idea of Basic. You will—if you go through, say, *Learning the English Language*<sup>1</sup>—see nothing very strange. What's chiefly to be noted is that certain very common and frequent words are not there. For example, *chair*. Why isn't it there? Isn't it a word of very great use? Certainly it is—but there is another English word of even greater use which does almost all the things the word *chair* does, and does more things as well. It is *seat*—covering *chairs*, and all the other things on which we may take a seat and then be seated, covering *settees*, *couches*, *settees*, *thrones*, *stalls*, *divans*, *hassocks*, *tripods*, *taborets*, *woolsacks*, and the rest—to make use of some words which like *chair* are not in Basic. *Seat* in addition in Basic lets us say, for example, "This is a room seating 150," or "Seating herself, she said, 'Please be seated.'" You'll go on yourselves with the other uses of this word.

So far we have been writing in Basic English. Now we are going out of it. There is no point in having people who know the rest of English talk Basic to one another. Winston Churchill put that very well in the House of Commons on November 4, 1943: "Basic English is not intended for use among English-

<sup>1</sup> Teachers' and Learners' Editions, 3 volumes, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943.

speaking people. . . . I have tried to explain that people are quite purblind who discuss this matter as if Basic English were a substitute for the English language."

We have only been writing in Basic to convince you that it is normal standard English—nothing pidgin or broken or funny about it. We'll go back to our main point—it omits certain common words. *Chair* was our example. It omits *chair* because it has another word, *seat*, which is rather more useful in the same field (*seat* in a train, in a theater, the *seat* of his trousers) and because *chair* does only one important thing that *seat* does not do—it gives us *chairman*. But note this—it's true of all such omissions. Foreign students are not going to *begin* their English-speaking career with a public address needing "Mr. Chairman." The great use of that title, of course, is for when the speaker doesn't know his chairman's name! Basic speakers are not allowed to be so careless. And note this, too. Very common words, names of common objects like *chair*, are very easily picked up. The teacher can safely leave them to the general public and concentrate on teaching things that have more need of her help. Have you ever known a student (in an English-speaking community) to be taught Basic without picking up about as many other English words out of school? Here is the answer to those who declare that Basic is too limited a medium to be offered to the world in place of English. It is not so offered and those who need and can use more English find Basic an escalator thereto.

So much for a sketch of what Basic is and how it was worked out. Now for some of the odd ideas that people somehow pick up about Basic. One is that it is some sort of "pidgin English." "Two mans come here yesterday," "Give this to I," etc. You'll be able to judge now on that. We may think that those who call Basic a "pidgin" don't know much about either Basic or pidgin English.

Another queer idea is that Basic and the rest of English are somehow two separate languages with some sort of barrier between them. It is not so of course; the essential words of Basic are the essential words of all English—

the very same words used in the very same ways. So, too, with the constructions. A student of Basic doesn't—while he's studying Basic—learn the rest of English. But does a student of first-year French learn his way about Mallarmé or Proust? There is good evidence now that students of Basic *do* in fact go on to the rest of English—to literary English—much more successfully than students who start in on more old-fashioned lines. And there are reasons for that. One is that the Basic words, because they are the words that will do the most work, are the words with which other English words can be most easily explained. The *General Basic English Dictionary* defines 20,000 and more English words in the Basic 850.

You would think that students of English would learn the most useful words rather than the literary words first. That sounds like common sense. But funny things happen in the teaching of English.

One of your authors will never forget a certain Japanese student. It was at Nara, and there was a fire. I went out to see it and met this student who attached himself for an English lesson—it's a way they have. The student would have had at least six years of English, probably more, and he did know some English—of a sort. But when I asked, "Where is the fire?" nothing more than a good deal of hissing resulted. I asked, "Is the fire out? Is it still burning? Have they put it out yet? Where is it? Which is the way to the fire?" and so on. At long last with great difficulty a reply came: the usual "I am very sorree for you. I do not understand you"! So I gave the student up. After a time, while I was actually watching the fire brigade at work on it—the fire was quite lively—I saw the boy again. He came up and said with great difficulty, "The gonflagration eess eggstinguished"!

Well, there you do have two languages: Basic English—"The fire is out. They have put the fire out"; literary English—"The conflagration is extinguished." It seemed as though our Japanese had only been "taught" the second. Basic would have helped him to keep nearer to the facts in this case with, "The fire is under

control," which is perhaps what his use of "extinguished" meant to indicate.

Talking of extinguishing, it isn't only Japanese students who prefer fancy language to ordinary plain English. Here is the Associated Press on one of President Roosevelt's press conferences:

Washington, March 10 [1943]. The polished polysyllabic profundities of James M. Landis, Dean of Harvard Law School and Director of Civilian Defense, seem to be a little too fancy for President Roosevelt.

The Chief Executive read to a press conference today a letter which Landis had prepared for him to send to the Federal Works Agency on the subject of blacking out Federal buildings during air raids.

"Such preparations shall be made," the letter said, "as will completely obscure all Federal buildings and non-Federal buildings occupied by the Federal Government during an air raid for any period of time from visibility by reason of internal or external illumination. Such obscuration may be obtained either by blackout construction or by termination of the illumination."

With a grin, Mr. Roosevelt hastened to remark that "obscuration" was not his word, nor was "termination of the illumination" his language.

He read on. "This will, of course, require that in building areas in which production must continue during the blackout, construction must be provided that internal illumination may continue."

Mr. Roosevelt asserted that he knew some people who had had internal illumination, and after a roar of laughter subsided, he continued once more with the letter:

"Other areas, whether or not occupied by personnel, may be obscured by terminating the illumination."

The Chief Executive stopped, turned to his press secretary, Stephen Early, and ordered a rewrite job.

"Tell them," he said, "that in buildings where they have to keep the work going, to put something across the window. In buildings where they can afford to let the work stop for a while, turn out the lights. Stop there," he ordered.

Mr. Roosevelt would have been 100 per cent in Basic if he had said, "In buildings where

it isn't so necessary to go on working, put the lights out."

Now for a glance at some ideas about the purposes of Basic English. One of them was dealt with by Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons in the sentence quoted: "People are quite purblind who discuss this matter as if Basic English were a substitute for the English language." Back in 1942, if we remember aright, he described the same idea in the same place as "fanciful." "Purblind" . . . "fanciful" . . . good strong English words though they are not in Basic. You'd be surprised, though, if you knew how many people have been taking up their cudgels and valiantly beating the air under the impression that we want to scrap English and make everyone talk only Basic. We'd join them, of course, if that was the idea, and so would Mr. Ogden, the man with the most variegated and sometimes outlandish vocabulary of anyone you are likely to meet. He is a good retort to the notion that work with Basic cuts your vocabulary down.

This takes us to a much more dangerous idea. The preposterous but in some parts prevalent notion that Basic is intended to take the place of French, say, for Frenchmen and for French speakers in Canada, or of Spanish in Spanish-speaking South America.

It isn't salt, it's vitriol that should be put on the tail of that absurd supposal. How can we wake up the people who voice it into doing a little thinking? For consider: every major country in the world has already adopted English in its school program as the first foreign language to be studied. Why? Not to replace the mother tongue. Nothing can replace that. Not because we as peoples or as governments have *made* them adopt it. We haven't and we haven't tried and we couldn't have done it if we had tried. In fact, the English-speaking nations have been remarkably careful not to try. Not because the other countries love us or our language especially well. Why, then? Because they see clearly and in hard/practical, realistic terms that they need a common second language. If they are to meet the coming world, they need better means of communication. Not necessarily for communication with

us, the English-speaking peoples. We are not quite as preponderant a part of the population on this planet as we are sometimes fond of thinking. English speakers are, in fact, about one-tenth of the human race. There are another 1,800 millions talking some 1,700 different mother tongues. And these peoples—as *physical* communications, the airplane, radio, television, and the like improve—are going to need correspondingly improved *mental* means of communication, with one another even more than with us. And the only immediately practicable means is through English—some sort of English.

Anyone who has seen much of English teaching in places like China and Japan, India and Malaya, must have some doubts as to what sort of English it is likely to be—as to how “broken” it will become in the process.

That is the current situation. English of *some sort* will be everywhere in the classrooms of the world as soon as the war ends. On current teaching practice, years of study don’t get most of the students anywhere. It’s really daunting to think of the billions of boy-girl years of toil that have been and will be wasted in the absence of an introduction to English which will take them more quickly to a useful point. In this situation Basic comes forward as such an introduction—as a way of easing the task which these countries have already voluntarily assumed.

And up go vociferous cries—not from these countries, but from sensitive souls in New York or London—of “Cultural imperialism!”

Let us be serious for a moment. Some of you may know areas in China where the spread of the cigarette habit has meant malnutrition—so slender is the economic margin, so poverty plagued are the people—malnutrition and all the consequent diseases, tuberculosis and the rest. The poor people could not afford cigarettes and enough food, so they bought the cigarettes. Nobody’s fault, maybe—but the cigarette habit came into China through English-speaking people’s enterprise! You never heard any cry go up about cultural or economic imperialism! You can see schools there too where insistence on largely futile English

studies has led to serious neglect of Chinese studies—the worst possible form of mental malnutrition, leading to all the consequent *cultural* diseases, nameless diseases: disorientation, spiritual flux, paralysis of intellectual digestion, loss of essential social communication . . . It is a grim picture. We propose to free more time for Chinese for Chinese students and we are told—by educators out of dramatics departments—that we are being “linguistically imperialistic.”

“Cultural,” “linguistic” imperialism—what do these adjectives mean? In reading Voltaire or Thomas Mann are you submitting to some sort of French or German conquest? If we belabor this nonsense too much, perhaps it is because so many goodhearted people seem to think it would be somehow wicked of us to help the rest of the world to learn English.

This chapter has dealt so far with points that haven’t received much attention in the published expositions of Basic. For the detailed specification of Basic the prime authorities are Mr. Ogden’s *The System of Basic English* and *The Basic Words*. For a more general and more recent account, see *Basic English and Its Uses*. We promised earlier to come back to one point in the design of Basic, one limitation on the remark that its words go through all the changes of form that the same words undergo in full English. It is this. On the Basic word list appear more than 300 words which might be regular verbs but which in Basic are used only as nouns. Basic confines itself to 16 verbs only, and the auxiliaries *may* and *will*. The reason for this is the immense simplification in teaching that can thereby be obtained. We can concentrate on these *in any case necessary* verbs, as we can by no other plan. First things first is the principle of Basic.

If you study the teaching texts of Basic, either *Learning the English Language* or *The Basic Way to English*, you will see how the principle works out in practice. *Learning the English Language* is the course developed in Massachusetts and Washington Adult Civic Education Classes. *The Basic Way* was the product of experience in India and Africa. A

*First Book of English*<sup>2</sup> was the product of Chinese classrooms. Similarly C. K. Ogden's *Basic Step by Step* and Mme. Litvinov's adaptation of it to Russian conditions are designed for yet other learning needs. There is a wide range of design in the Basic texts for teaching foreign students. No one picking up one of them should suppose that is the only way in which Basic may be presented. Basic indeed, through the very compactness of the material to be taught, has made experimentation in grading—in the order in which points are taught—relatively easy. And the key to this compactness is in the reduction of the verbs.

Consider these Basic verbs for a moment. Twelve of the sixteen *in their key senses, the senses that are taught first*, describe *visible actions*. They are:

come	go	give	get
put	take	keep	let
make	say	see	send <sup>3</sup>

Because these verbs describe *visible actions*, what a sentence using one of them means can be seen as it is said. The action can be performed as the sentence is pronounced. These are the most eminently demonstrable general verbs in the language. And, of course, these demonstrable uses describing *visible actions* are taught first. Academic critics of Basic sometimes go wildly astray here. These verbs, as we all know, have innumerable uses. Basic doesn't for a moment attempt to teach them all. It teaches first the *visible action* uses; then, in a carefully controlled order, the other uses which, *if the visible action senses, the key senses, have been properly grasped*, are fully intelligible in context. Ogden went through all the senses and sieved out the uses that aren't intelligible. These are just brute facts of the language, sometimes called idioms. Then he sorted these out into those needed for coverage and those not needed. Those needed are very few.

The result of all this work is recorded in *The Basic Words*—a little book that is the outcome

of a unique piece of analytic lexicography. The result is—for teaching purposes—a simplification within a simplification. Not only are the words and constructions of Basic cut down to a minimum but the ranges of meaning of its words and the recommended phrases are similarly pruned down and limited. Perhaps this is a subtle point. It's important though. Surprisingly enough, most of those who make academic comments on Basic seem never to have heard of it or to have had *The Basic Words* in their hands.

This reduction to 16 verbs is the most astonishing thing about Basic. It made Basic possible. It is the really new and original thing about Basic. You will not be surprised, therefore, if it is the point at which routine minds aim their attacks. Some have actually said that it would be easier for a foreign learner—who already knew and could use the words *put* and *together*—to learn a new word, *combine*, than to learn to say and understand the phrase *put together*! You'll agree that an academic opposition reduced to this is not very formidable.

The point to note, however, is that the Basic verbs and the other words they combine with in Basic (as defined for teaching purposes in *The Basic Words*) are words any student of English has to learn, *whether he comes into it through Basic or not*. We don't avoid *put* and *together* by teaching *combine*. We don't avoid *go* and *up* by teaching *ascend*, and so on. These words and phrases are indispensable for even a modest understanding of English anyhow. What Basic does is to recognize this, teach them thoroughly, *and use them*.

This brings us to our final point, the last extremity of fanciful opposition, the objection with which this handbook is primarily concerned: *the alleged difficulty English-speaking people will experience in attempting to learn Basic*. This fantastic objection crops up in all sorts of places. Here is one academic critic in the correspondence columns of the *New York Times*, for example: "As applied to English speakers, Basic calls for as much study as would be entailed in acquiring a foreign tongue."

<sup>2</sup> I. A. Richards, Peiping, China, 1938. Under the authority of the Orthological Institute of China.

<sup>3</sup> The other four verbs in Basic are: *be, do, have, seem*.

You would think a professed authority on languages would make some inquiries before venturing a remark so ridiculously wide of the facts. He goes on: "Learning to forget what we have so painfully acquired, learning to do without the wealth of words accumulated by those who spoke English before us. . . ." You'll note he, too, seems to think that we are all going to give up our English for Basic! This same authority announced that for foreign learners Basic is considerably more difficult than ordinary English.

Here is another specimen of the same sort of dreaming: "Basic is more easily learned by a foreigner than by an Englishman for the reason that the Englishman has to unlearn thousands of words which are unnecessary in Basic English."

And here finally is *The New Statesman* (September 11, 1943) on the same point: "Before he left Downing Street did the Prime Minister take the precaution of memorizing the 99,150 words which he must not use?"

We give you all these samples of this objection lest you may think we have to do with one solitary product of unregulated speculation. *The facts are that English-speaking people can easily learn Basic in a couple of days.* It has been done in a morning. Large classes of English speakers have learned it in half a dozen sessions. Work through a few of the exercises in this handbook and prove it for yourself.

This whole story of the supposed difficulty of Basic for English speakers takes no account of the facts. Why not? There are plenty of people who could supply the facts, plenty who know by direct personal experience whether it is or isn't hard to learn Basic. Why didn't these objectors consult someone who knows? Simpler still, why didn't they borrow one of the books, and sit down to find out for themselves before bursting out into public print? There is a very simple answer. The critics didn't want to know. They preferred to feel sure that things were as they wished. It's such a human failing that I don't suppose one should blame them.

To sum up:

1. Basic is not a *pidgin* English.
2. There is *no barrier* between it and the rest of English. Only a specialist can tell when a speaker goes into it or comes out of it.
3. It is *not* intended to take the place of full English, nor will it.
4. It is *not* intended to take the place of anyone's mother tongue, nor will it.
5. It is *no threat* whatever to the cultural or linguistic independence (or any other sort of independence) of any country whatsoever. On the contrary, its effect would be to free more time for other languages.
6. Basic is *not* harder for foreign learners than a similar number of other English words. On the contrary, it is far easier.
7. And finally, it is *not* hard at all for English speakers.

On this last point readers of this book will soon be in a position to judge. Hitherto only general accounts and specifications and texts having the foreign learner and his teacher in view have been available. In spite of that, many English-speaking people of the most diverse talents and training have taught themselves Basic without overmuch trouble. A handbook designed expressly for them with graded exercises founded on wide experience of their problems should considerably lighten an already manageable task. At the same time it will bring out, more explicitly and more concretely, the uses and values of Basic as a tool for the English speaker.

Why should he equip himself with it? There are general as well as special reasons. The strongest general reason is that Basic is one good way by which he can refresh his interest in his native language. It makes him ask himself a thousand questions about the words and locutions he handles as a rule so glibly; it strips the veil of custom from a thousand openings for profitable reflection; it restores curiosity as to a thousand nuances which familiarity blinds us to; it whets the edge of our verbal discrimination. In all this the adept in Basic is inquiring not so much into Basic as into the rest of the language. One of the outcomes of a widespread study of Basic will certainly

be increased wear and tear on the greater dictionaries.

Allied to this is an enlarged sense of the miraculous resourcefulness of the English we work on with Basic, and respect for the sheer quantity and order of the meaning which good writers or speakers will commonly be attempting to convey. And with that often come shocked discoveries of the amount that is currently missed, and of the ineptitudes of interpretation that disgrace so many arguments.

Another general gain is the repeated alerting of our understanding of how sorts of writing differ. To make a Basic version is a way of finding out how far we understand a passage. More than that, it shows us what sort of understanding, what sort of responsiveness, the passage asks us to bring to it. All the customary distinctions—between prose content and implied attitudes; between sense, feeling, tone, and intention; between statement, suggestion, and persuasion in all their co-operations and embranglements—cease to be academic abstractions and become very concrete challenges to our discernment when we attempt to reproduce all we perceive of the meaning in the limited terms of our instrument.

These are some of the general values which exercise with Basic can give—educative values germinating at the point, our grasp of our language, where gains may become most fruitful. The specific uses of skill with Basic are more obvious. For the numberless occasions when our job is to say one thing at a time as clearly and as simply as possible and to say it with the best chance of being understood, practice with Basic is directly helpful. Not that we will then necessarily say it in Basic—that depends on the audience and the language we have in

common, and there is, of course, no magic in Basic by which it will do our work for us. The help comes through the practice in comparing different ways of saying the same thing which Basic has given us. Under this heading the relevance of Basic to the teacher, the administrator, the publicist, and the advertiser needs no more than mention. Examples are given in the body of the book.

Basic, after all, was designed by Mr. Ogden to be an international language, and it is naturally there that its greatest field of use is to be seen. It is those of us who have to do with foreign learners limited in their knowledge of our language who will benefit most obviously from Basic in their efforts to meet their correspondents and interlocutors halfway. As a writer in *The Hindu* (Madras) puts it, "For the Anglo-Americans its spread is a call for self-conquest and the service of others."

The spread of a common second language does not, of course, by itself mean a more peaceful world. It is well to be neither too despairing nor too confident about the peace. It will depend for its stability upon countless things—among them it will depend upon how the ordinary citizens of the different countries get on with one another in their necessary contacts. These contacts are going to increase suddenly and fabulously in the next crucial 20 years. There is a chance, through English and through Basic, of easing them immensely in time for the next great crisis around 1965. It is one of many easements that will be needed. It is worth working for. Must we not believe that—other things being equal—better means of understanding will lead to better accord? He is a cynic indeed who doubts it.

## CHAPTER TWO

# The Vocabulary

WHAT is the difference between visiting a man and going to see him, extracting a tooth and taking it out, forbidding a person solid food and saying he may not have it, preparing a meal and getting one ready, retiring at 10 P.M. and going to bed at that hour, rising at 7 A.M. and getting up then, dispatching a message and sending one, maintaining silence and keeping quiet, assisting your friends and helping them, commenting on something they do and making an observation about it, enlisting in one of the services and joining up, occupying a house and living in it, concentrating on your work and putting your mind on it? What we do is the same whether we bestow \$10 upon a man or give it to him. The difference is a purely verbal one. We give an account in different words of the same thing. The second way of saying it is in every case a Basic way. It keeps to the vocabulary and rules of the system of Basic English.

To be able to express himself in Basic, an English-speaking person must first get to know which words are allowed in the restricted vocabulary. Every book in or about Basic carries with it a list of these 850 words in eight and a half columns and a summary of simple rules for putting them together. Before examining the list, anyone setting out to learn Basic would do well to jot down for himself some at least of the words he would expect to find there. It will help to put them under different headings, THINGS, QUALITIES, and OPERATIONS, etc., as the Basic chart divides them. Six hundred Basic THINGS provide us with the words for abstract ideas and concrete objects; 150 QUALITIES give us adjectives for refining these ideas and describing the objects; and the compact left-hand column of 100 OPERATIONS, etc., furnishes a newcomer to the language with the

neatest little kit for building English sentences that has yet been devised. Understand the subgroupings of the OPERATIONS list and you have a bird's-eye view of the syntax of your own language. It summarizes the essential means we have for expressing relations between things—that is, for building sentences.

When you look over one or other of the short samples of Basic restatement given above you will readily see which words in it come out of which Basic group. In *take a tooth out*, for example, *tooth* is the only word from the list of THINGS. *Take*, *a*, and *out* will be found in the OPERATIONS column. For building the sentence, *I say that this person may not have solid food*, you use two names for THINGS, one adjective giving a QUALITY of one of these things and seven OPERATIONS words by means of which you are able to express the relation which you have in mind between the person on one hand and the solid food on the other. If you were a Dutchman or a Mongolian, of course, setting out on your first English lesson, even with the simple start that Basic provides, it wouldn't be easy to put such sentences together. You'd first have to get to know English word order and the inflected forms of pronouns and verbs for which you will find only the head words *I*, *he*, *you*, *who* and *have*, *be*, *do*, etc., in the OPERATIONS column. English-speaking people know *me*, *my*, *mine*, *we*, *us*, *our*, and the rest. They know how to use the tenses of the verb in its different persons and numbers, and which order to put their words in (doer of the act, operator, thing done, etc.). Their task in learning Basic is very much simpler: (a) finding out and remembering which words are on the list, (b) getting to know which of the various familiar ways of using these words are permitted in the system. They can get a general idea of it

very quickly. Part (b) of this task is the subject of the next chapter; part (a) of the rest of this chapter.

When an English-speaking person confines himself to Basic he deliberately restrains himself from using nine-tenths and more of his vocabulary. There is nothing very unusual about that. We all more or less consciously scale down our language on many occasions—sometimes too consciously when we are talking to children whose capacities we underestimate. The novel thing about Basic is the defined and systematic character of the reduction. When we make use of Basic we keep within limits which few people 20 years ago would have thought possible. It was not until 1929 that Mr. Ogden's first pronouncement in the American press about the word list upon which he had been working for years explained it as "a scientific attempt to select the most fundamental words in the current language to form a practical auxiliary language for all nations," and stated that "To have succeeded in getting on the back of a sheet of notepaper in legible form all the words actually needed to communicate idiomatically most of the requirements of international correspondence, science and commerce (the acrostic of British, American, Scientific, International, Commercial makes up the Basic name) is the claim of those who have spent a decade in compiling the vocabulary here printed."<sup>1</sup>

If you have been trying your hand at making up a one-page fundamental vocabulary before studying this one, you'll see something of the scale of the task. But you will comprehend the magnitude of the achievement only when you put the word list to the test. Several years of testing and a rapidly expanding library of well over 100 Basic books bear witness to its adequacy and to the thoroughness of the work that went into it. Random attempts to guess the make-up of the list seem rather futile perhaps. Yet, however rough may be your own jottings on the THINGS, QUALITIES, and OPERATIONS you expect to find included in the authentic word list, a comparison of the two will prove instructive. It will show you some of

the principles of selection, and trying to use the list will show you more. With the thought that such comparison provokes, remembering which words are and which are not included becomes less of a strain than you might expect. In fact there will be very little strain if the 12 exercises which complete this chapter are taken easily and not all at once.

EXERCISE I. Consider THINGS PICTURED first. A third of the Basic list of THINGS is given up to names for common objects. We can point to such things when they are present, and we can easily make rough pictures of them when they are not, but we cannot conveniently eliminate all the names of them from any pocket vocabulary. As you try out Basic you will soon discover their wide usefulness. If you try drawing up such a list you will think of names of things that people anywhere in the civilized world are likely to know. Many of them are things men eat or wear or work with, or common living things and parts of them. They will include parts of the body, things used for food, articles of clothing, buildings and parts of buildings, furnishings, machines, and instruments. You will not find it difficult to say which 10 in each of the following groups of picturable objects are most likely to be named in the list of 200 Basic pictured things:

1. *nose, planet, avenue, boat, otter, glove, desk, canoe, trunk, star, street, cow, pomegranate, casement, mitten, table, proboscis, window, box, potato*

2. *maiden, coat, shears, book, revolver, plume, coupon, bird, town, canary, village, ticket, jacket, church, gun, cathedral, girl, scissors, novel, feather*

3. *saucer, spade, adder, plate, trowel, mare, snake, foal, gate, portrait, shovel, horse, picture, mosquito, door, ranch, fly, farm, seminary, hammer, gavel, school, maul*

As you check your choices from these groups of words with the 200 list in columns six and seven of the word list, you may be struck by the omission of words like *automobile, radio, hotel, or bank*, but those are already international so don't need to be learned.

<sup>1</sup> *Saturday Review of Literature*, July 20, 1929.

Wherever such things are available in the world their names are known. Basic permits the use of 50 international words (see page 41) and holds a further list of 50 likely additions on reserve to be accepted whenever their international currency becomes indisputable. The 50 are general language equipment, known everywhere by such men and women as they may concern, much as special scientific terms are known by experts in the different sciences. (*Basic for Science*, page 47; *System of Basic English*, pages 6-7.)

Then compounds like *post office* (built from an international word with the name of a picturable thing added), *fishhook* (assembled from two picturables), *toothpaste* (obtained by adding a picturable to a general name), and *outcome* (where two OPERATIONS words together make a noun) help out the list. Such compounding from single words is allowed if the sum of the parts makes sense to a person familiar with their separate uses. So *handbag*, *warship*, and *overcoat* are quite clear, where *starboard* and *ballroom* and *butterfly* would have to be learned as something new, and are therefore ruled out, just as overidiomatic word combinations are ruled out in Basic discourse. The English-speaking beginner has only to remember that *the object of Basic is to keep discourse to the clearest, simplest level*. That will guide him in his handling of the pocket vocabulary, which is listed with the accepted uses of all 850 words and the addition of compounds and international terms in Mr. Ogden's *Basic Words* (Kegan Paul, London). For 100 per cent Basic that little book is his invaluable reference. For simple conversation with beginners in English who want to understand what you are saying, 90 per cent Basic is enough.

EXERCISE II. The QUALITIES list might well be considered next. It is easy to see that the range of reference of even 200 names of things can be vastly extended with the help of adjectives. We do not need such words as *stream*, *village*, *twig*, or *cookie* in a pocket language if we add the widely useful quality *small* to the equipment of the picturable list. The same quality, or *young*, will dispense with words like

*kitten* and *calf*. A few more adjectives will make it possible to distinguish between *red apples* and *green*, *quick trains* and *slow*, *new hats* and *old*. And a glance back at the list of 200 picturable things with which we have just been working will bring to your attention how common to things these qualities are. We could talk of some specimens of all the picturable things as *small*—there are even small ants and small pins, though all ants and most pins are small. All living things are at some time *young*, and all objects were at one time *new*. And an animal that is not young, or a thing that is not new, need not necessarily be old, which reminds us of another tremendous range of possible modifications to be made by using *un-* or *not* before a quality as needed (a thing Basic permits us to do). In fact, when you come to examine the Basic QUALITIES list you will note its arrangement with the 100 most indispensable adjectives first; then a list of 50 which can be learned by a newcomer to the language in a second round, as a relief from having to say *not right* for *wrong*, and *not good* for *bad*.

If you go on with the selection of Basic qualities for the list yourself, you'll find it simpler to systematize the job a little first by tackling them in groups. There will be some words for talking about the *color* of things, for example, and others for their *taste* and *smell* and *size* and *form* and *position* and *condition*. Such exercise makes us aware of a fundamental difference between these qualities and those others that permit us to talk of the use or value of things to us and the feelings we have about them. All but the blind and the color blind will see a red book as *red*, but the book may be *important* to only one out of a thousand. Basic, with its restricted, carefully chosen group of "projectile" adjectives, forces our attention upon the fundamental difference between such qualities of things as we can distinguish through our senses and the qualities which we ascribe to things but which are really our feelings or opinions about them.

Then, besides, it makes us think about comparison, and the fact that most of our qualifications, consciously or unconsciously, are made as a result of comparison. *Long* compared with

what? *Important* in comparison with whom? Which reminds us that such highly useful quality words as *like* and *same* and *different* will have to appear on any Basic list so that a comparison can be put into words when we want to draw attention to a thing with explicit reference to something else.

1. Which 10 of the following qualities would you expect to find on the Basic list: *sagacious, good, rough, microscopic, happy, infinitesimal, expansive, uncouth, wise, jocund, wide, plangent, approximate, small, sad, stalwart, substantial, dry, strong, solid*?

2. Which one quality on the Basic list might be used to describe a person whom someone called *solemn*; another *glum*; another *heavy*; another *sober*; another *thoughtful*; another *intent*; another *purposeful*; another *grave*; another *earnest*; another *reserved*?

3. Which one quality on the Basic list might be attributed to anyone described as *extraordinary, eccentric, unfamiliar, peculiar, exceptional, alien, foreign, quaint, outlandish, queer, freakish, odd, or weird*?

EXERCISE III. Now the list of GENERAL THINGS. When you know these and how to use them with the 16 Basic operators you know Basic. They range all the way from words like *seat, harbor, building, and mother* and others like *milk, metal, and part* to names of acts like *push* and *walk* and abstract ideas like *approval* and *harmony*. None of them may readily be explained by simple pictures. That is why they are separated for the learner from the 200 names of separate picturable objects. Draw a *seat*, and your learner will look at a chair or a stool or a bench or a couch and not know that *seat* is a general name used for any of these. Draw a *harbor* and his attention will turn to ships or to a river mouth. Draw *milk* and you will show it in a milk bottle or a glass or being got from a cow. Mass words like *milk* and *metal* and names for the common divisions of things are on this list, as are words for various relations and conditions and the words *relation* and *condition* themselves.

If you put down the most useful English

words you can think of under each of the following headings you will have the beginnings of a list of GENERAL THINGS to compare with the Basic 400:

1. Material things not easily pictured (*insect, instrument*)
2. Common substances, solid, liquid, and gaseous (*chalk, water, air*) about 50 of these
3. Parts or divisions of material things or of space or of time (*bit, back, field, week*)
4. Persons—general class, family, sex, or occupation (*man, son, servant*)
5. Common acts (*bite, jump*)
6. The feelings and other “psychological” words such as *attention, hate, feeling*

Or you may like to explore the list of GENERAL THINGS at once with the help of these six groupings, and see which words in it fit under which category. Then look over the unclassified remainder to determine what sort of usefulness they are likely to have.

1. Which 10 of the following general things do you expect to find on the list: *memorandum, government, increment, pit, evening, uranium, hole, plutocracy, record, augmentation, burrow, increase, twilight, metal, comment, perception, night, observation, precaution, solicitude, discourse, care, hazard, chance, opportunity, conversation, perforation, talk*?

2. In each of the following groups, which word is on the general list?

- (a) *ascent, declivity, slope, escarpment, gradation, inclination*
- (b) *foreboding, timidity, fright, panic, fear, terror, apprehension*
- (c) *ability, power, capacity, potency, vigor, strength*
- (d) *arbiter, critic, umpire, magistrate, arbitrator, judge, referee*
- (e) *quiz, inquiry, question, interrogation, query, problem*

3. Which word on the general list might help one to do without the following?

- (a) *slumber, doze, nap, hibernation, drowsing, snooze*

- (b) *implement, tool, utensil, contrivance, agent, contraption*
- (c) *decoration, embellishment, adornment, trimming, accessory*
- (d) *encounter, assembly, gathering, junction, confluence*
- (e) *lamp, candle, illumination, dawn, enlightenment, radiance*

### *The Interdependence of Words on the Basic List*

Conjecture about the content of Basic, before we have become familiar with the detail of the list, is useful only up to a point. The choice of the words was a complex matter. Anyone deciding what words to include among the 400 general names would undoubtedly consider *life* and *nature* and *truth* and *necessity* and *possibility* and *goodness* and *beauty* and *wisdom* and *electricity* and *likeness* and *difference* if he did not know that *living*, *natural*, *true*, *necessary*, *possible*, *good*, *beautiful* and *wise* and *electric* and *like* and *different* were among the list of 150 QUALITIES. Similarly even a verb so seldom used as *excoriate*, or the more common *flay* or *abrade* or *strip*, could not be eliminated unless some such word as *integrity* or *skin* were included with the general names, and *from* or *off*, as well as *take*, with the OPERATIONS words. And *take* can do the work of verbs like *seize* or *snatch* or *grab* only if such words as *violent* and *sudden* are available for conversion into adverbs by the addition of *-ly*. Then again, when *seize* means *take by right*, still other words are needed. In fact, words cannot be thought about as isolated units if their work is to be systematized at all within a compact vocabulary range. Clearly, the selection of the vocabulary could not be made on the basis of anything so limited in its significance or so mechanical and mindless as a frequency count.

Nor can the redefining of terms proceed as simply as if all words had single, separable, unchanging meanings, as scientific terms may have. Take, for example, the verb *to think*. The noun *thought* is on the Basic list but *take thought of*, *give thought to*, *put thought on*, etc., by no means cover adequately among

them the work the verb *think* can do. We might say that a man is *giving something thought* if we mean he is thinking about it, but we might also say that he is *turning it over in his mind* or *giving it his attention* or *looking into it*. And if we want to give a Basic restatement of "He thinks a lot of his brother," we shall first have to determine from a wider context what the remark means. If by *of his brother* is meant *about his brother* then the restatement might run *His brother is frequently in his thoughts*, but the meaning of the comment is more likely to be *He has a high opinion of his brother* or perhaps *His brother is very dear to him*. Again, usually when we say a man "thinks for himself" we do not mean that he takes thought for himself as in "Take no thought for the morrow" but that his *processes of thought are independent*. And if we say that he "thinks he can do a certain thing" we probably mean that he *is of the opinion that he is able to do it* or that he *has a feeling that he will be able to do it*. Yet these are only a few of the possible uses of such a common verb as *think*.

We can use the Basic vocabulary really effectively, then, only as we get to know the selection of key ideas named on its list, and how these ideas, like the locksmith's or the burglar's skeletons, turn in various types of verbal lock, as well as the grammatical forms these key words are allowed to take. QUALITIES help out the limited number of names of THINGS and both help the operators. We have no name "lamb" in Basic, but we have a *young* or *small* or *baby sheep*. We have no "hills" (except in the special list of 50 science words for geologists), but we have *high land* and *slopes* and *low mountains*. We have no verb "to surprise," "to fear" or "to hate," but the names of the conditions *surprise*, *fear* and *hate* may be combined with operators to give us *take by surprise*, etc.

Which brings us to the examination of the rest of the list.

EXERCISE IV. There remain the 100 structure words in the OPERATIONS column to the left of the list. These it is easiest to take up in

groups, beginning with the 16 operators at the head of the column.

Basic has just 18 verbs, two of which are used only as auxiliaries. The rest Ogden prefers to call "operators" and 10 of them, at least in their most readily demonstrable uses, are the

names of the simplest acts man can perform. These meanings Ogden calls their "root senses."

See if you can fill in the 16 operators to make sense of this short Basic account of their simplest uses:

We see how important the 16 "verbs" of Basic are when we make an attempt to give some account of their root senses in other words. For example, the simplest sense of ..... is the act of putting a thing into another person's hand; while ..... is the opposite process of having something put into one's hand. .... is in one sense the opposite of *be*; it says that some condition probably, but not certainly, is. Or it may say that an error is being made, as when water (in the Sahara) ..... to be where there is no water. .... is the name of the connection between an owner and his property. .... and ..... are words for naming the act of moving to and from a person. The name of the act of not letting go, or of going on having, is ..... Not to keep a person from doing a thing is to ..... him do it. To ..... may be the act of giving existence to a new thing as in "He ..... the earth and all that in it is," or it may be to put things together in some new way, as when we ..... a box. To ..... a thing somewhere is to give that thing a fixed place, and to ..... it is to make normally a certain sort of change in its position. But when Japan ..... the Philippines there was no change in their position (or was there?). ..... is in a way like *it*, for as *it* may take the place of the name of any *thing*, ..... may be the representative of any act word.

The other three, ....., ....., and ....., are complex words. They are nearer to being "verbs" in C. K. Ogden's use of that word, and are less necessary than the other 13. If you ..... a thing, physically, it is before your eyes; if you ..... it you put it into words, and if you ..... it anywhere you make it go to that place.

You can check your answers to these questions by consulting the Basic list (page 109). The 16 operators, you may notice, are listed alphabetically in three subgroupings, *be*, *do*, and *have* being placed together as the three that can also be used as auxiliaries, for tense changes, question forms, etc., of the verb. *Say*, *see*, and *send* are more complex than the rest, as has been pointed out. *May* and *will*, which follow the 16, can be used only as auxiliaries, to express future time, condition, etc. They have one past form each (*might*, *would*) and no other inflections.

The 16 operators would, of course, be quite

incapable of doing substitute work for the four or five thousand verbs in common use in English if they were not supported by the next group of words in the OPERATIONS column, the prepositions, or *directives* as Ogden prefers to call them. In Basic, we go *on* our way instead of proceeding, go *into* a building instead of entering it, go *over* a statement instead of reviewing it, go *up* a mountain instead of ascending it, go *with* a person instead of accompanying him, and so on. The Basic expression is just as English as the other; facilities for breaking down verb ideas into their component parts of OPERATIONS, DIRECTIONS, etc., exist

alongside the more complex vocabulary elements of the language so that we constantly resort to them for explaining new words. To *excoriate*, we say, means *to take the skin off*, and we are using a Basic restatement when we say it. The highly analytical nature of English makes such procedure possible. It took Ogden to discover that the 16 Basic operators and their auxiliaries *may* and *will* may be

made, with the help of other Basic words, to carry the verb load of full English if need be.

A little practice with the breaking down of full English verbs will show how readily they may be replaced by Basic operators, directives, etc. Try making Basic restatements of the following. Some may be handled in various different ways. One restatement of each in Basic is given opposite as a check.

#### EXERCISE V. In Basic:

When we <i>enter</i> a room	we	come or go into it
When we <i>leave</i> it	we	go out
If an army <i>advances</i>	it	goes forward
If it <i>retreats</i>	it	goes back
If a man <i>hurries</i>	he	goes quickly
If he <i>dawdles</i>	he	goes slowly
If you <i>ascend</i> some steps	you	go up them
<i>in descending</i>	you	come down
If a man <i>precedes</i> another	he	goes before him
and if he <i>follows</i> him or <i>pursues</i> him	he	goes after him
If you <i>forget</i> a thing	it	goes out of your mind
and if you <i>recollect</i> it	it	comes back to you again
If you <i>visit</i> a relative	you	go to see him or go to his house
and if you <i>inherit</i> some money from him	you	come into it
If men <i>convene</i> or lines <i>converge</i>	they	come together
When the sun or the moon <i>rises</i>	it	comes up
and when it <i>sets</i>	it	goes down
+ If it <i>disappears</i> behind a cloud	it	goes under it, or out of view
and if it <i>reappears</i>	it	comes out again
When bombs <i>explode</i>	they	go off
and when lights <i>are extinguished</i>	they	go out
When a roof <i>leaks</i>	water	comes through it
and when a boat <i>sinks</i>	it	goes down
When things <i>happen</i>	they	come about
and when they <i>are discovered</i>	they	come to light

All these and many more full verbs may be handled with 2 of the 16 operators *come* and *go*. Basic also permits the use of such readily understandable compounds as *overcome*: A man may *undergo* an experience, *overcome* his

fears and *become* important. His *income* may go up. He may be looking up *incoming* and *outgoing* boats and trains and not see an *oncoming* automobile. The *outcome* may be unhappy.

EXERCISE VI. Now cover over the right-hand half of the page and try out these. In Basic:

When we <i>bestow</i> something on a person	we	give it to him
and when we <i>receive</i> something from him	we	get it from him

If we <i>authorize</i> a person to do something	we	give him the power
and if we <i>publish</i> the fact	we	give it out
If we <i>devote</i> ourselves to an undertaking	we	give ourselves up to it
and if we <i>sanction</i> it	we	give approval to it
If we <i>abandon</i> an idea or <i>relinquish</i> hope	we	give it up
When we <i>strike</i> a man	we	give him a blow
and when we <i>signal</i> to him	we	give him a sign or make a sign to him
When we <i>prepare</i> for something	we	get ready for it
and when we <i>ponder</i> it or <i>think</i> about it	we	give our mind or thought to it
When we <i>promise</i> to do a thing	we	give our word that we will
and when we <i>submit</i> to it	we	give in to it
A man <i>escaping</i> from prison		gets out
and <i>recovering</i> from a disease		gets over it
If we <i>reply</i> to someone	we	give him an answer
and if we <i>elicit</i> an answer from him	we	get it out of him
If we <i>obtain</i> a seat	we	get one
and if we <i>vacate</i> it	we	get out of it, or give it up
When we <i>support</i> a thing	we	give it our support
If we <i>assist</i> a person	we	give him help
and if we <i>hinder</i> him, probably	we	get in his way
When we <i>disclaim</i> a thing	we	give up the right to it
and if we <i>reclaim</i> it or have it returned	we	get it back
When we <i>despair</i>	we	give up hope
and when we <i>please</i> someone	we	give him pleasure

*Give* and *get* are a useful pair of verbs. Of *get*, Ogden says, speaking in Basic, in *The System of Basic English*, page 95: "When anything is our property, it may have been given to us, or we may have taken it, or it may have come to

us in some other way. *Get* is the most general word for all such processes, in relation to everything which may be talked about." He follows up his statement with a useful summary of the range of uses of *get* in common practice.

#### EXERCISE VII. In Basic:

When we <i>deposit</i> money in the bank	we	put it there
and when we <i>withdraw</i> it	we	take it out again
When we <i>pick</i> up a book in the library	we	take it up
and when we <i>borrow</i> it	we	take it away
If we <i>return</i> it to its shelf	we	put it back there
If we <i>impose</i> upon someone	we	put upon him
and if we <i>depose</i> a ruler	we	take authority from him
and if we <i>replace</i> him with another	we	put someone in his place
If we <i>tolerate</i> something	we	put up with it
When a man <i>deceives</i> us	he	takes us in
and if we <i>eject</i> him from a house	we	put him out

When we <i>terminate</i> a discussion	we	put an end to it
and if we <i>reopen</i> a question	we	take it up again
If we have a tooth <i>extracted</i>	we	have it taken out
When we <i>procrastinate</i>	we	put things off
and when we <i>repose</i>	we	take a rest
If we <i>sign</i> a statement	we	put our name to it
and if we <i>frame</i> a picture	we	put it in a frame
If we <i>patch</i> a sleeve	we	put some cloth over the hole
If we <i>bite</i> into an apple	we	take a bite of it
If we <i>look</i> at a thing	we	take a look at it
		hands
and if we <i>feel</i> of it	we	put our fingers on it or take it in our
If we <i>straighten</i> or <i>tidy</i> a room	we	put things away or in place
If we <i>dissect</i> something	we	take it to bits
If you <i>photograph</i> anyone	you	take a picture of him
If you <i>destroy</i> something	you	put an end to it
If you <i>ask</i> a man something	you	put a question to him
and if you <i>inform</i> him of certain facts	you	put them before him
<i>Humiliating</i> a person	you	put him to shame
and <i>robbing</i> him	you	take something from him
If a man <i>murders</i> another	he	puts him to death
If we <i>arrest</i> the wrongdoer	we	take him up
and if we <i>imprison</i> him	we	put him in prison

Such examples give an idea of the covering range of *put* and *take*. Of *take*, in *The System of Basic English*, page 102, Ogden has this to say: "We *take* what is *put* for us (generally with our hands) and when we have *taken* it we put it somewhere ourselves. When, for example, there are different sorts of food which have been put out, the question is, *What will you take?* A great number of things which are put

for us are given; so *take* will go with most of the things which are said to be given to us, such as *a name, an order, a chance, a cold, a position, a suggestion*. The chief thing which almost anyone is ready to take, if it is given freely or in payment, is *money*. In the same way (when it is offered to us or is free) we *take a seat*."

#### EXERCISE VIII. In Basic:

If we <i>retain</i> a thing	we	keep it
and if we <i>relinquish</i> it	we	let it go
When we <i>avoid</i> a place	we	keep away from it
and when we <i>avoid</i> a person	we	keep away from him
If we <i>unlock</i> and <i>enter</i> a building	we	let ourselves into it
and if we <i>admit</i> someone else	we	let him in
and if we <i>refuse to admit</i> him	we	keep him out
If a teacher <i>detains</i> a boy after school	she	keeps him in
and if she <i>dismisses</i> him	she	lets him go
If we <i>refrain</i> from doing something	we	keep from doing it
and if we <i>permit</i> some other person to do it	we	let him do it
If we <i>prevent</i> him	we	keep him from doing it

We may *keep* a secret or a cat or a cow, and up late and *let* ourselves in for trouble or *keep*  
*let* a house or an office, *keep* up with the out of it.  
 Joneses and *let* down our hair, *keep* our friends

## EXERCISE IX. In Basic:

When we <i>create</i> or <i>concoct</i> something	we	make it
If we <i>remodel</i> a thing	we	make it over
and if we <i>invent</i> a reason for doing		
so	we	make one up
If we <i>equate</i> two things	we	make them equal
and if we <i>reduce</i> one of them	we	make it less in some way
If we <i>increase</i> it	we	make it greater
If we <i>decipher</i> a bit of writing	we	make it out
and if we <i>explain</i> it to someone	we	make it clear to him
When we <i>clarify</i> a thing	we	make it clearer
and if we <i>obfuscate</i>	we	make it less clear
When a doctor <i>cures</i> a man	he	makes him well
If you <i>pamper</i> a person	you	make overmuch of him
and if you <i>exasperate</i> him	you	make him angry
		less
If you <i>soothe</i> him	you	make his nerves quiet or his emotion
If you <i>adopt</i> a baby	you	make it yours by law
If you <i>err</i>	you	make an error

There are hundreds of things men *make* from indicating compulsion, *making* things happen.  
 other things (cloth from wool, buildings from For example:  
 wood, etc.) and then there is the use of *make*

If we <i>compel</i> a person to do something	we	make him do it
If we <i>repair</i> a watch or a machine	we	make it go (or put it right)
If we <i>starve</i> a person	we	make him go without food
and if we <i>feed</i> him by force	we	make him take it
If we <i>hatch</i> a chicken	we	make it come out of the egg
and if we <i>drive</i> a cow through a gate	we	make it go through
If we <i>pull</i> a thing toward us	we	make it come in our direction
If you <i>direct</i> a man's work	you	make him do what you have in mind
If you <i>send</i> him away	you	make him go away

EXERCISE X. Breaking down *send*, which is although simpler than other highly complex  
 itself a Basic operator, into the parts *make* and verbs which they help one to *dispense* with  
*go* is a reminder that there are 3 of the 16 (in Basic, *do without*).

operators that permit of restatement in simpler (a) *Saying* is a more Basic way of *speaking*,  
 terms: *say*, *see*, and *send*. They are on a higher *reciting*, *stating*, *remarking*, *commenting*,  
 level of complexity than the nine fundamental *uttering*, *vouchsafing*, *asserting*, *declaring*, and the rest.

When we <i>repeat</i> a thing	we	say it again
When we <i>deny</i> something	we	say it is not so
When we <i>refuse</i> someone	we	say no to him
When we <i>accept</i> him	we	say yes to him

If we <i>quote</i> him	we	say what he said
and if we <i>mimic</i> him	we	say it the way he said it
If we <i>announce</i> him	we	say his name
and if we <i>introduce</i> him to people	we	say his name and theirs
If we <i>contradict</i> him	we	say his statement is wrong
and if we <i>lie</i> to him	we	say what is not true

(b) *Seeing*, similarly, though we can get round it by a cumbersome circumlocution, is a highly useful word and a Basic substitute for *observing*, *describing*, *witnessing*, *noting*, *re-marking*, *spying*, *beholding*, in some of their uses, as well as *perceiving*, *discovering*, *grasping*, *comprehending*, *knowing*, *understanding*, and other ways of "seeing with the mind's eye."

Give wider English equivalents to show the work being done by *see* in the following Basic statements:

I will *see* you tomorrow, when I have more time.

Come and *see* me some day.

I *see* what the trouble is.

He doesn't *see* the point.

He doesn't *see* well.

(c) *Send* also helps to keep the English of Basic natural and smooth although, as we have seen, *make go* is a more analytic way of referring to the same act. We *send* a person here or there, or *send* things to him by rail or post, too frequently to manage conveniently without the short familiar expression. *Send* helps to eliminate more complex terms like *throw*, *dismiss*, *dispatch*, *mail*, *expel*, *transmit*, *convey*, *discharge*, *produce*, *exude*, *emit*, *propel*, *drive*, *request by message*, *donate from a distance*, and *return*.

Those 12 operators name acts. The next operator, *do*, is the most general name of all the more than 4,000 familiar acts that men and machines perform, the acts which are reducible to phrases using one or other of the Basic 12. We could not *do* without it. *Do* has a number of uses with which all English-speaking people are familiar, including the almost pronounlike job of substitution for a fuller statement to

avoid repetition, as in "He made an error in that yesterday, and today he *did* it again," and "She came late and so *did* he."

Another important use of *do* is its use in negative expressions, "I *do* not go there every day," and still another its use for emphasis, "He *did* do it, I say," and "*Do* make less noise."

*Do* also acts as the sign of a question before all the subjects of all the other operators we have been using. It even supplies this sign before itself, as in "*Did* he *do* it?" as well as before *seem* and *have*, two of the three other operators not yet discussed. The exception is the verb *to be*. We don't ask "Do you be there?" Nor does Basic. But the rest of the Basic operators ask questions this way. *Have* is the only one of the 15 with which *did* is sometimes unnecessary. We say, "Had he three boys with him or only two?" and "Did he have three boys with him or two?" though the second of these is in some circles frowned upon. Basic follows common practice here as in all its syntax rulings for verbs, though no doubt the foreign learner would be happier if he were taught only one form.<sup>2</sup>

EXERCISE XI. The other operators besides *do* with auxiliary as well as full verb use are *have* and *be*. The three are grouped together on the list. Where the main auxiliary uses of *do* are in question patterns and for emphasis, *have* makes it possible in Basic as in full English to form the perfect tenses of all verbs, including itself ("He has gone," "We had had it before"). Without changing the nature of English it would be impossible to do without the operator *have* in any pocket edition of the language.

In its full verb use, *have* might be described as standing midway between the acts already so, though he could be well understood, would stir the risible faculties. And so taught, he would have more difficulty in understanding common English. So Basic avoids all such simplifications.

<sup>2</sup> He would be happier still if English took the reasonable course of dropping all otiose inflections and always said, e.g., *did give* for *gave* or *I be here* for *I'm here*, *He be seeing* for *He sees*, and so on. But a foreigner who spoke

discussed (*come, take, send*, and all the other forms of *doing*) and *be* and *seem*, the remaining two operators. Although the old-style grammar books include it in their lists of transitive verbs, describing it as the act of possessing, and referring to its active and passive voice, the relation expressed by *have* is usually a condition rather than an act. *Have* states a condition, where *put* or *send* or any other act in

some way changes it. Men *have* property, land, money, etc., whatever things are theirs. We also speak of them as *having* whatever is a part of them—hair, eyes, and thoughts, for example. And similarly with things. A house may *have* two bathrooms and a book 300 pages, in Basic as in full English. *Have* is a widely useful part of the concise verb equipment of the system.

If we <i>possess</i> a thing	we	it have
and if we <i>own</i> it	we	have a right to it
If we <i>control</i> it	we	have control of it or power over it
If we <i>know</i> a thing	we	have knowledge of it
and if we <i>worry</i> about it	we	have it on our mind
If men <i>argue</i> over something	they	have an argument
and if they <i>fight</i>	they	have a fight
If a person <i>wants</i> something	he	has a desire for it
and if he <i>needs</i> it	he	has need of it
If he <i>must</i> do a thing	he	has to do it
and if he <i>needn't</i> do it	he	doesn't have to
When we <i>breakfast</i> with a man	we	have our morning meal with him
and when we <i>board</i> in his house	we	have our meals there regularly
If a woman <i>bears</i> a baby	she	has it
and if a man <i>suffers</i> from gout	he	has it

There are left just *be* and *seem*, the first the most widely used verb in all the English language, and the second in a sense its opposite.

*Seem* allows us to talk of the semblance or outward aspect of a thing or its image or reflection in a mirror (It seems black but it isn't, He seems to be there but he is here) or one's opinion of it (It seems to me, etc.). In Basic it helps to eliminate *appears, looks* (used as a verb), *impresses one as*, and *suggests*. It also supplies an example of what in full English we call a regular verb. It forms its past tense by adding *-ed* to the present. In Basic as in full English it is frequently used with the verb *to, be*. We may say "He *seems* happy," but we can also say "He *seems to be* happy," and we always say "He *seems to be* working, laughing, moving," and so on.

*Be* is as essential to Basic as to full English. As a full verb it is used in *pointing and naming statements* (That *is* a white ant), *classifiers* (The ant *is* an insect), *descriptions* (The edge

*is* rough), and *locating statements* (The book *is* on the table). It is necessary for *definitive purposes* (A quadruped *is* an animal with four legs). In some uses *be* will take the place of *represent* (Let X *be* the first number) or *equal* (Two and two *are* four) or *occur* (The fight *was* here).

As an auxiliary *be* is used, first, to form the continuous or progressive tenses of all verbs, in Basic as in full English (He *is* going, They *were* doing it, She *has been* working), and, second, to form the passive voice of all transitive verbs. In Basic as in full English we may say either "The boy sent the ball over the wall" or "The ball was sent over the wall by the boy" or merely "The ball was sent over the wall."

The OPERATIONS list completes the equipment for expressing the *time* and *condition* of the performance of any act by adding the auxiliaries *may* (with past form *might*) and *will* (with past form *would*). The absence of *can* as an auxiliary is not difficult to get used



*continue*, go by for *pass*, go through for *traverse*, go off for *leave*, and go away for *depart*. In modern European languages, these words recur constantly. There is a relatively small number of them. Unlike nouns (name words), such as *train* or *automobile*, which are sometimes the same and often similar in different languages, they are difficult to guess. The same remarks apply to link words such as *and*, *but*, *when*, *because*, *or*; and to a large class of words called adverbs, such as *often*, *again*, *perhaps*, *soon*, *here*, *forward*. These three groups of words together make up the class which grammarians call *particles*. Since they are essential words for clear statement, and are not the sort of words of which we can guess the meaning, it is interesting to know how many of them there are, and how frequently they occur.<sup>5</sup>

Of the "link words" (conjunctions) mentioned here by Bodmer, only *often*, *perhaps*, and *soon* fall outside the Basic list: the first is unnecessary since the Basic rules permit the addition of *-ly* to qualities, and *frequent* is on the quality list; the second is easily circumvented when *may* and *be* and *not* and *certain* are on the list, and when *possibly* may be made from the quality *possible*; the third may be handled by such phrases as *in a short time*, *in ten minutes*, *in a day or so*, according to the needs of the particular context in which it occurs.

Which words besides verbs are included in the OPERATIONS column? You can quickly get a bird's-eye view of their range and variety by making use of Ogden's subdivisions within the list. If you turn to page 109 you will see that the operations are alphabetized in small groups of words and may be readily divided off by lines drawn across the column to make the arrangement more evident.

(a) First, already mentioned, is subgrouping within the verbs, so that *come*—*take* (the first 10 words in the column) form a unit; *be*, *do*, *have* with their additional auxiliary uses another; *say*, *see*, *send* with their greater complexity a third (not shown as separate by the alphabetization because *say* falls after *have*) and *may*, *will*, which are only auxiliaries, a fourth.

(b) Next comes a group of 20, readily recognized as the prepositions which Ogden prefers

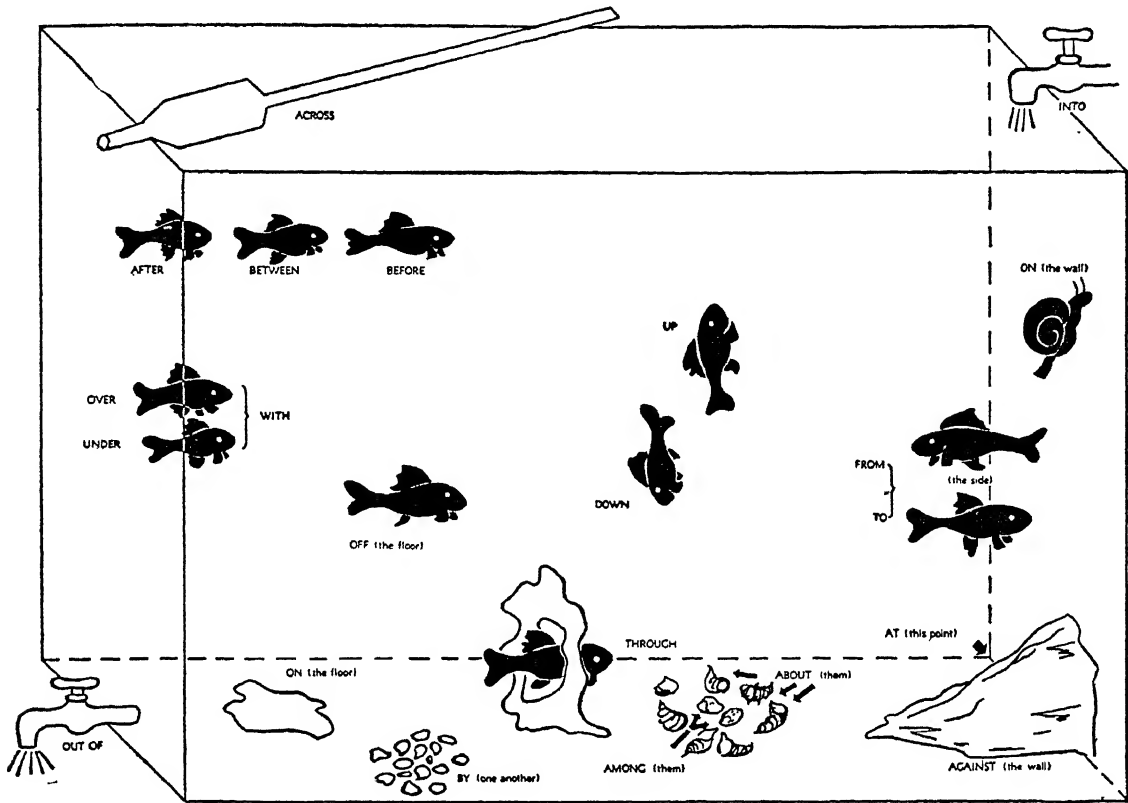
to call directives, and which you have been using widely already in the analysis of full verbs. These are the troublemakers to foreigners learning English. There are similar troubles in other languages, as Bodmer, adopting Ogden's term, points out:

The most capricious words in a language like our own are particles, especially those classified as *directives* (*to*, *with*, *for*, etc.) and the link words or *conjunctions* (*and*, *because*, *though*, etc.). . . . Any particle has a *characteristic* meaning in the sense that we can use it in a large class of situations to signify the same kind of relationship.<sup>6</sup>

Bodmer has followed Ogden here and in the later diagrams for displaying the characteristic meaning of common directives. Ogden calls it the *root sense*. On the page opposite are his root senses of the 20 directives displayed in a diagram reprinted from *Basic English and Its Uses*, page 35.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.



Explain them as directions or positions in space first, and you can arrange their harder uses in an ordered set of increasingly difficult examples. So *The Basic Words* lists under the first of these, *about*, the following examples of its uses, moving from the root sense explained in the diagram and others related to it, on through one-starred and two-starred idioms which are recommended only after the simpler uses are clearly understood.

**ABOUT:** Trees *about* the house; walking *about* the streets. There are *about* enough; at *about* four. A book *about* history. Be right *about* the facts. The servants are *about*; looking *about* for a place.

\*The glass is *about* to be broken. How did this come *about*? Worked up *about* it.

\*\*Hanging *about*.

With the more widely used directives like *to*, *in*, *on*, the grading of uses requires many more instances, and the ordered list of examples in

*The Basic Words* provides a comprehensive outline of teaching difficulties.

The remainder of the OPERATIONS list conveniently divides into the following groups:

(a) *as—than*. Particles expressing relations that are not spatial, though some are prepositional (others conjunctive)

(b) *a—who*. Particles that sharpen points of reference in the sentence, and are subdivided into

- (1) *articles* (*a* includes *an*)
- (2) *indefinite pronouns* (some of these have an adjective use, as quantifiers)
- (3) *demonstratives* (with plurals; used also as adjectives)
- (4) *personal pronouns* (each of these is a head word for all inflected forms: *he-she, it, him, her, his, its, they, them, their, theirs*)
- (5) *interrogative and relative* (*who* is a head word for inflected forms *whom, whose, which, and what*)

(c) *and—why*. Particles that join word groups and include three subgroups:

- (1) *co-ordinate conjunctions* (He came but I went.)
- (2) *subordinate conjunctions* (He came though I left.)
- (3) *conjunction-interrogatives* (He came when he was ready. When did he come?)

(d) *again—yes*. Particles that are primarily adverbs

- (1) of place or time or manner (*again—well*) used with operators
- (2) of degree (*almost—very*) used with other adverbs or quality words
- (3) for special time and space relations (given in three pairs. Note that *to-*

*day* is a Basic compound of *to* and *day*)

- (4) for affirmation and request

EXERCISE XII. If you fill in blanks from memory in the next exercise you will review these relation words in the order in which they occur on the Basic list. Use *one* OPERATIONS word and *only one* under each number, and never repeat it under any other number. Notice that you are completing 100 per cent Basic sentences and using all OPERATIONS words in their root senses, given as their first senses to be taught in *The Basic Words*. You can check your results from the OPERATIONS column, beginning with the thirty-ninth word on it, and working down in sequence to the hundredth.

1. The ball was ..... hard ..... iron.
2. He had a desire ..... food.
3. He took a bit ..... cake.
4. He is waiting ..... tomorrow, but no longer. He was unhappy ..... they came.
5. She is a better worker ..... her sister. There is nothing other ..... that.
6. This is ..... box of bricks. That is ..... apple.
7. All ..... skin has been taken off the apple.
8. .... insects have six legs. That is ..... they have.
9. He hadn't ..... money whatever. He would not take ..... from me.
10. He comes ..... day, seven days a week. (Compounds: —body, —day, —one, —thing, —where.)
11. ...., I will not do it. I have ..... money at all.
12. India is the ..... side of the earth from here. One or the ..... of us will do it.
13. .... old men are bent. .... are bent and ..... are straight. (Compounds: —body, —how, —one, —thing, —times, —what, —where.)
14. There is no ..... thing as a round square. Things ..... as these are not possible. (Compounds: —like.)
15. .... man there did it. .... is an airplane in the sky. He was so angry ..... he said nothing. I said ..... he was foolish. .... (plural form) books are for her. (This word is *not* used in Basic in place of *which* as a relative: e.g., The letter *which* came was mine.)
16. .... man here did it. .... is my left hand. My point is ..... Those needles are like ..... (plural).
17. .... am here. My hand is part of ..... It is ..... hand. .... (you and I) are here. Our hands are parts of ..... They are ..... hands.

18. .... (my brother) is here. .... (my sister) is not here. You see .... but you do not see .... This is .... (my brother's) hat. .... is .... hat. That is not .... (my sister's) hat. .... are my relations. I am .... (my brother's and sister's) brother. One of .... is my brother.

19. .... are wrong .... self, John. .... did not take cold from going without .... coat when .... were working. .... men are like babies!

20. .... is that man? .... is his name? It is the man .... came yesterday, the man to .... I gave the coat, the man .... leg was broken. .... leg was it? It was his right one, the one .... is a bit shorter than the other.

21. Two .... two are four. He .... I went on foot .... the others took their Buick.

22. He didn't come .... he was not sent for. It is no good .... it is broken.

23. He is tall .... he is not six feet high. All .... the foolish have ideas. He is not only quick .... able.

24. You will be first .... I will. Was he going .... coming? Was she there .... not? Two .... three were there. We say the foot .... the base of a mountain but the floor of a room.

25. There will be room .... you come early. Take the top off and see .... it is inside. .... he is right then you are wrong. .... only he had a good voice! There were at least three .... not more.

26. .... old, he is still strong. The grass is dry .... it was raining early this morning.

27. He was happy .... he was there. Do it .... there is still time. (This word may not be used in Basic in place of *time*: e.g., For a short *time*.)

28. I will see .... cold it is. .... is your mother feeling? .... much is this dress? I will see .... it is done. (Compound: —ever.)

29. .... will the war come to end? He was in bed .... the news came. .... he took up the gun it went off. (Compound: —ever.)

30. .... is the Amazon River? That is a place .... there is never any rain. Take care .... you go at this time of night. (Compounds: —as; —by—ever.)

31. .... are you here, if not for that? There is no reason .... it is necessary.

32. He did the work .... when I said it was badly done. Then .... there is this other point. .... and .... the thing was attempted, but to no purpose.

33. Have you .... seen the president? No man will go on living for .... There is not .... time for all one is hoping to do. (Compound: —green.)

34. Do not go ..... from the house. They sent him ..... away. Nothing has been done about it so ..... London is ..... (comparative degree) from San Francisco than from New York. Moscow is the ..... (superlative) away.

35. They went ..... 10 yards. He was in the ..... part of the boat. She put ..... a suggestion. His behavior was .....

36. He is ..... with me now. .... is a book for you. Come ..... to me. (Compounds: —after; —with.)

37. They got ..... enough to see the bird's markings. Her house is ..... ours, only half a mile away. They came ..... and ..... (comparative). Take him to the ..... (superlative) hospital. (—ly is not Basic. *Almost* does its work.)

38. I will go ....., before it gets late. .... is the time to do it. You will ..... see a strange thing. From ..... on I will do it myself.

39. He has gone ..... into the garden for a minute. Flowers come ..... in the spring. He had a tooth ..... yesterday. The book had an ..... (comparative) cover. (Compounds: —burst; —come; —cry; —door; —going; —house; —law; —let; —line; —look; —put; —side; —skirts; —stretched.)

40. He is ..... strong at 70. The play is ..... going on but it will be over in a short time. (..... for *quiet, not moving*, is not Basic.)

41. He was young ..... but now he is an old man. .... he got angry. He did it ..... and there.

42. He was not ..... when it took place. .... it is, on that table. Are you ....., John? I am in agreement with him ..... He did it then and ..... He says ..... were three men in the boat.

43. They all four did it ..... till one man had to go. He put the clock ..... but it would not go. We will get ..... for another meeting next week. He put his things ..... before he went.

44. He does his work very ..... for a little boy. You may ..... say so. The table was ..... polished. He was ill last week but he got ..... quickly. He is ..... over 50. He does ..... (comparative) than that when he takes time. This is good, the ..... (superlative) thing you have done. (Compounds: —being; —off.)

45. She will not be long, she is ..... ready. We are ..... there now. The boy is ..... a man now.

46. There is not ..... food to go round. I will take this; it is good ..... If you go far ..... you will see a red house.

47. It is cold today everywhere, ..... in the sun. They took him ..... though he said he would not go. He has no fear ..... of death. .... if I did go with him I didn't do anything. This is a good book but this is ..... more interesting. (..... may not be used in Basic in the sense of *equal, smooth, level*.)

48. The man is ..... more than an animal. It makes me a ..... angry. He is able to do very ..... A ..... goes a long way. She was a ..... baby, only five pounds. He comes ..... (comparative) frequently now because he is unable to get gas. He is the poorest; he has the ..... (superlative) money of them all.

49. How ..... is that hat? There is ..... to do and we may not get to the end. It is not raining ..... now. .... of what he said was true but he was wrong in one thing. This is very cheap, ..... cheaper than that. There is ..... (comparative) water in the sea than ever came out of it. This is the ..... (superlative) private room I have.

50. No, he is ..... here today. .... one of them would go with him, so he went by himself. It was ..... good, it was bad. He did ..... go till later.

51. This came ..... yesterday and has not been opened. It was not ..... cold but wet. I was ..... feeling it, not moving it. If ..... you were here! He was an ..... son.

52. It is ..... ready so you will not have to be kept waiting. That is almost but not ..... the right color. Yes, it is ..... a good book.

53. I am ..... tired that I am going to bed. I am certain he did it because he says ..... I was wrong and ..... was he. I will do it myself ..... there is nothing to keep you.

54. He is ..... ill and may not get well. He came ..... much more quickly this time.

55. .... is the day after today. .... morning I will come.

56. .... was the day before today. .... morning was wet.

57. The United States is ..... of Mexico.

58. Washington is ..... of New York.

59. The sun comes up in the .....

60. The sun goes down in the .....

61. May I ..... go with you? ..... take me with you. Say ..... and then I will give you some. (Note: ..... may take the *-er*, *-ing*, *-(e)d* endings in Basic: e.g., I am .....d with my new hat. She has a .....ing face.

62. ...., I will do it. He said ..... but his brother said no.

## CHAPTER THREE

# The Rules

THERE, then, is the first part of the English-speaking person's task displayed: finding out and remembering which words are on the Basic list. As you proceed with a survey of the simple rules that govern their use, you may like to test yourself on the knowledge of the pocket vocabulary so far gained. The following exercises are provided both as a check and as a means of coming to closer grips with the words, at first alone and then in action. Work first from memory, then turn to the Basic list for what you do not recall and find your answers there. A key is provided for each exercise that needs one.

EXERCISE I. Underline all Basic words among the following. Then check yourself by the Basic list: *number, many, glad, happy, whole, complete, altogether, amount, quantity, often, frequently, seat, chair, tell, say, metal, mineral, meal, food, eat, house, home, building, shop, store, office, business, place, location, position, spot, point, bring, take, get, find, need, want, desire, wish, hope, anticipate, think, thought, read, reading, price, priceless, life, living, existence, corn, grain, night, evening, noon, morning.*

EXERCISE II. A surprising number of book titles happen to be completely in Basic. How many can you think of? You should find 18 Basic titles among those given below. (Proper names may of course be used in Basic as in full English.) Check those that are entirely in Basic and underline the non-Basic words in the remainder. *The Book of the Dead, War and Peace, The Brothers Karamazov, Representative Men, The Scarlet Letter, The House of the Seven Gables, North and South, The Land of Heart's Desire, Past and Present, Toilers of the Sea, Arms and the Man, Last Days of Pom-*

*peii, Tales of a Wayside Inn, Little Women, The Sketchbook, The Moonstone, Little Man What Now?, Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, American Notes, Stones of Venice, The Way of All Flesh, A Sentimental Journey, Tom Brown's Schooldays, Black Beauty, The Old Curiosity Shop, The Woman in White, Sense and Sensibility, The Tongues of Men, We Are Not Alone, The Turn of the Screw.*

EXERCISE III. Underline the non-Basic words in the six paragraphs below. Then check yourself by the word list. (You will notice that it is usually possible in these particular passages to find a Basic synonym or approximation which may be substituted for the wider English word without disturbing the syntax of the sentence. The exercise is put together with that in mind. Practice in proofreading near-Basic is useful for a start.

1. A brief enumeration of the most spectacular of the new inventions gives us an idea of the part they have had in making modern America. The telephone speedily became an essential addition to every office and store.

2. Make great the name of the Lord; the worship of the Lord is holy and beautiful. Make clear his high place among the nations, his great works among all peoples. Let the heavens rejoice in their ruler and the earth be full of song.

3. The liver is the largest solid organ inside man's body. It must have a number of important things to do but we are in doubt about some of them. Part of its function is to keep the blood free from poison. All the end-products of digestion go into it before being sent out again as red blood through the body. All the starch and sugar foods are stored there in the form of "glycogen" or animal starch.

4. The world of today is still working out the questions handed down from the French Revolution in the political field and the English Revolution in industry. The revolution in industry has been responsible for more changes in men's ways of living and in the kind of things they do than any other event in history. It was the outcome of uniting science and industry.

5. A cell is generally a flat, round body so small that it may only be seen under a microscope. But there are many other sorts of cell. Cells can be like balls, or square bricks, or stars, or thin threads. And some may be seen very easily without a microscope at all.

6. A sailor should see his military duty as a debt he has to his country. If he does his work quickly and quietly, that soon gets to be his regular way of acting. If he keeps in good spirits and makes a real attempt to do the right thing, he will get a chance to improve in rating. Obedience makes learning easy. Each man in service can have the right state of mind toward his work. He should also have respect for authority. Each order given by any man in authority must be obeyed without question.

EXERCISE IV. Put the appropriate form of one or other of the 18 operators in the blanks to complete this bit of Basic narrative:

Mr. Jones ..... to his feet, ..... his hat on, and ..... out into the night. He ..... a deep breath or two and ..... a small stone jumping across the sidewalk off the toe of his polished boot. He ..... feeling better now that he ..... up his mind. Clearly this ..... the thing to .....

It ..... late—how late he ..... no idea. His footsteps ..... a hollow sound in the dark street. He ..... unable to ..... an inch in front of him. “..... anyone ..... up?” he ..... to himself. Then, looking hard at the delicately lighted face of his watch, “But certainly. It ..... only a little after 12. I ..... even ..... in time for a word with James as well as his sons. It ..... possible, at least.”

Turning into a side road he ..... to a stop at the third door on the left. He ..... out his hand, feeling for the bell. There ..... quick steps and he ..... out the sound of a woman's voice. Then James's daughter ..... there!

She ..... him in and ..... him a little kiss as he ..... his hand on her arm. She ..... like James. She ..... nothing and ..... no need of words. She ..... a comfort to him. He ..... that her face ..... serious but not sad.

“..... your father by himself?” he .....

“No. John ..... an hour earlier but he ..... still here. The two sailors ..... with them. William ..... a note. He ..... not ..... till tomorrow. Some sudden business ..... him. It ..... strange not to ..... him here.”

KEY: *Paragraph 1*—got, put, went, took, sent, was, had made, was, do. *Paragraph 2*—was, had, made, was, see, Will, be, said, is, may, be, is. *Paragraph 3*—came, put, were, made, was. *Paragraph*

*4*—let, gave, put, was, said, had, was, saw, was. *Paragraph 5*—Is, said. *Paragraph 6*—came, is, are, sent, is (or *will*), coming (or *come*), kept, seems (or *is*), have.

EXERCISE V. Fill in directives (prepositions) *General History* (Nelson, 1938). Remember from the Basic OPERATIONS list to complete the that compound prepositions may be formed following extract from Carter and Ogden's from two Basic words if necessary.

It seems strange ..... us now that the men ..... the Old Stone Age were able to go ..... foot ..... Europe ..... Africa, and that ..... place ..... the Straits ..... Gibraltar, there was a land-bridge ..... the two. And they were able ..... go ..... Europe ..... Britain because Britain was joined ..... Europe, and the Thames and the Trent and the Seine all went ..... the Rhine. South Africa was joined ..... India. America was joined ..... land ..... Asia ..... the one hand and ..... Scotland ..... way ..... Greenland ..... the other. Then, ..... great natural changes, Europe became separate ..... Africa and Britain ..... Europe.

... Probably ..... ten thousand years ..... the birth ..... Christ most men had got ..... the stage ..... development named the New Stone Age, and were moving slowly forward ..... a new level ..... existence. They were now expert ..... all the most necessary arts: training animals as servants ..... man; farming; making thread ..... plants and cloth ..... thread; forming pots and cooking vessels. But they were still ..... metals and ..... writing.

..... the museums we may see and take ..... our hands the very things which were used ..... the earliest men. They are, ..... fact, our oldest histories. .... them we have the most interesting story ..... the development ..... early man, ..... the first attempt ..... cracking a stone ..... the polishing and forming ..... it ..... a very good instrument ..... fighting or other purposes. . . .

..... thousands ..... years men made other great discoveries. When they were looking ....., stones they somehow came one day ..... a bit ..... bright hard substance, the metal copper. .... time they became expert ..... hammering and polishing this substance and made use ..... it ..... ornament. But they saw that copper was not hard enough to make strong fighting instruments and other such things. .... a time they came ..... another metal, tin. Then, later still, ..... getting copper and tin mixed, they were able to make a very hard metal named *bronze*. This great discovery made possible the use ..... strong bronze instruments ..... place ..... stone ones, and because bronze was better ..... cutting stone and wood, men were now ..... a position to put ..... better buildings. The Great Pyramids ..... Egypt, put ..... the dead, were made ..... the help ..... bronze instruments.

KEY: *Paragraph 1*—to, of, on, from, into, in, of, of, between. to, from, into, to, into, to, by, to, on, to, by, of, on. through, from, from. *Paragraph 2*—about, before, of, to, of, to, of, in, of, from, from,

EXERCISE VI. Put Basic words from the list of general THINGS in the blanks to make sense of this extract from Stafford Hatfield's *Inventions and Their Uses in Science Today*, from

without, without. *Paragraph 3*—In, in, by, in, In, of, of, from, at, to, of, into, for. *Paragraph 4*—After, of, for, across, of, In, at, of, for, After, across, by, of, in, of, for, in, up, in, up, for, with, of.

the chapter on "Sound." (For example, in sentence 1, the missing words are: *part*; *body*; *use*; *inventions*.)

One ..... of our ..... makes ..... of two good ..... which are overlooked at another. Our eyes have ....., by which ..... may be completely shut out if desired. But when the ..... are off, the ..... which does get in has to go through a small ....., the round black ..... in the ..... of the eye. This ..... quickly and automatically makes an ..... of its ..... to the ..... of ..... the eye is getting, shutting up small when the ..... is strong and opening when the ..... is feeble. It is strange that we have no ..... of this ..... fixed to our ears. They have to take what they get, even if it is unpleasing or gives .....

On the other hand, our ears have a much wider ..... than our eyes. We are conscious of ..... between 20 a second and 30,000 a second (a ..... of 1,500 to 1, the ..... of our eyes being only about 2 to 1). With increasing ..... our ear ..... gets less. The ..... of the young is better than that of the old: their ears take in much higher ..... The ..... of the bat, a mouse-like ..... with wings, which goes about chiefly at ....., is one common .....; a young ..... has the ..... of ..... its high ....., but an old ..... has not. And cats and dogs have the ..... of ..... much higher ..... than we do. For this ..... their ears take in a soft "hiss" which has very high ..... in it. When you see a cat in the street again make a very soft hiss at it. It will be conscious of the high ..... over the loud ..... of all the ..... in the street, and put up its ears.

KEY: (This is a harder puzzle than the last. It shows us how many of the key ideas nouns can carry. We have a much greater range of choice open to us when it is these we have to fill in. You may find some alternative renderings, e.g., *sounds* instead of *things* in the last blank, which will work as well if not better in the passage.) *Paragraph 1*—part, body, use, inventions, covers, light, covers, light, hole, part, middle, hole, adjustment, size, amount, light, light, light, apparatus, sort, pain. *Paragraph 2*—range, sound waves, range, range, years, range, hearing, notes, cry, animal, nightfall, test, person, power, hearing, note, per-

son, power, hearing, notes, reason, notes, note, noises, things.

EXERCISE VII. Find the points at which this reporter goes outside Basic. The quotations are taken from six feature articles carried by one newspaper at three-day intervals just after Mr. Churchill's comments on the international usefulness of Basic (Harvard University, September 6, 1943). The fact that the stories were in a restricted vocabulary and syntax went quite undetected by office staff and public

alike, thus proving to the editor's satisfaction that there is nothing queer about Basic.

1. Big-hearted Cab-driver Left Holding the Baby (headline for one of the articles).

2. Instead there came a telegram but it came too late: "Cannot come to see Barbara today but will come soon" . . . Mrs. Triano likewise had a heart as wide as all outdoors. "Let's not do anything until the weekend," she said. . . . Dominick gave her a piece of his mind.

3. It may be quite a while before, as the song puts it, the lights come on again all over the earth, but there were many signs yesterday that this town will be much brighter before very long. . . . Lighting experts, who have been hammering the Office of Civilian Defense as the cause of the screwball rules, made a point yesterday that the Pacific Coast dimout had been given the brush-off. The Atlantic seaboard, they said, might well do the same.

4. A German woman taken to Governors Island for questioning said that the war was forced on Germany but Germany would rule the world. The manager of one F.B.I. branch said that she had a strong belief that the Nazi kind of government was the best. She was a "second cousin" of Rudolf Hess.

KEY: 1. *big* (Basic has both *little* and *small* but only *great* for the opposite quality. You can think of one reason for the inclusion of *little* at once. It is listed in the OPERATIONS list and it is primarily for use as an adverb. We can add *-ly* to form an adverb from *great* but not from *small*.)

*cab* (Basic has *automobile* and *taxi* as 2 of the 50 international words.)

*left* (As used here, the past participle of the verb *leave*, which is not in Basic.)

*holding* (Some 300 Basic nouns take endings *-er*, *-ing*, or *-ed* when necessary but *hold* cannot be one of these as it is not on the list!)

KEY: 2. *instead* (A convenient word but Basic cannot afford it when it has the widely useful *in* and *place* and *of* as well as other possible phrases.)

*too* (A homophone to be avoided for the beginner when *to* and *2* are Basic. *As* and *well*, both Basic words, make it unnecessary.)

*cannot* (*Can* slips into most attempted Basic at first. *Not able to* takes its place here.)

*soon* (*Presently* is more economical than *soon*. It is built from the quality *present* by adding the adverb sign *-ly*, allowed in Basic. *Before very long*, *in a short time*, *in 10 minutes or so*, are other alternatives.)

*likewise* (Two Basic words, but what would the beginner make of them as a compound?)

*until* (Choosing *till* instead of *until* for the OPERATIONS list avoids confusion of *un* with the prefix *un-* permitted in Basic for negatives.)

*piece* (Another avoidable homophone. The homespun *bit* saves the beginner from confusion with the Basic word *peace*.)

KEY: 3. *while* (In OPERATIONS list, but not as a synonym of *time*. Don't use *while* as a noun.)

*many* (Perhaps the most popular addition to Basic. Nearly all beginners let it slip in now and then. *A great number* and *quite a number* are useful alternatives.)

*screwball* (*Screwdriver* is good Basic but why not *screwball*? Of course for an audience that understands slang, this sort of word can be used most effectively, but in writing, the Basic practice is to put it in quotation marks, as with technical terms not covered by any special vocabulary. [See *Basic English*, page 74.] This reporter, writing for an English-speaking, slang-using public, had a good time in his feature articles exploiting the word list for such ingenious slang expressions as *push-over*, *monkey-business*, *sticking one's neck out*, *the brush-off*, *make no bones about*, *ball-and-chain*, *coughing up the —*, *no kick coming*, *make a crack at someone*.)

*dimout* (A special term needing quotes. *Black-out*, though compounded of Basic words, is not strict Basic either, but might well have claims today as an international word.)

*seaboard* (Ingenious, but not Basic any more than the nautical *starboard* is, or a *board* of education. *Board* in the sense either of a border or of a committee is too far removed from a plank of wood to be clear to a beginner.)

KEY: 4. *rule* (The verb *rule* is not a Basic operator, though *ruling* and *ruled* may be used as substantive and adjective extensions of the noun *rule* on the list of general THINGS.)

*world* (cf. *The System of Basic English*, page 130. "The 'world' is the *earth* when we are talking of space, but when all the 'world' is shocked it is *everyone*. In again another sense the 'world' may be things or conditions, as in *The 'world' is changing*." *World* is on the special list of words used in translating the Bible.)

*kind* (On the Basic QUALITIES list the opposite of *cruel*. Basic has the word *sort* for referring to a grouping of things.)

"*second cousin*" (In strictly Basic writing additional words introduced in quotation marks are explained by means of some Basic definition either in parentheses or in a footnote. One would question whether this bit of information is important enough to the discussion to introduce in such a way here. Would not *some relation of, a family connection of, or from a branch of the* . . . . . *family* be enough?)

EXERCISE VIII. With the help of the Basic science list, check through this passage from Raymond McGrath's *Twentieth Century Houses* (Faber and Faber, 1933), a book written in Basic because it addresses an international public. Mr. McGrath adds only a very small number of architectural terms and general science words to the 850 and keeps strictly to Basic syntax. See if you can account for each word that does not appear on the list in the form in which it is used here. You will find legitimate uses of derivatives, adverbs formed from qualities, measurements, etc., covered by the summary of rules at the foot of the right-hand column of the Basic word list, as well as compounds and proper names. Can you find three words that are obviously international, and three others that you cannot account for in your examination of the word list?

"Corbusier puts forward in his *Ville Contemporaine* (1922) a design for a town of 3,000,000 persons in which no more than three-twentieths of the space is taken up with building. The work of all public organizations and all business is housed in 24 tall buildings 60 floors high and grouped at distances of a quarter of a mile in the open centre of the town. Round these great glass and steel-frame offices in the full light of the sun are the public buildings, theatres, restaurants and places of amusement among stretches of grass and trees. The rest of the town is a series of flats grouped round garden squares 1,200 feet by 600 feet in buildings 110 feet high planned on the system of Corbusier's *Esprit Nouveau Pavillon*, but full of that changing effect which is not

to be got out of buildings which are regular and parallel to the street. Round the town-limits are stretches of woodlands kept free from building, and to the east the great storehouses, works and goods stations, to the north, south and west the sports places and small dependent garden towns with separate houses. The two chief roads running north and south and cutting one another in the centre of the town are 360 feet wide for 18 lines of transport in two directions. . . . In his design Corbusier keeps one very important point in mind. To make possible a high-rate mass transport by rail he has kept the same number of persons to the space unit in his town as in the great towns of to-day. In the *Ville Contemporaine* the normal number of persons housed to the acre is 120. In Paris to-day it is 145. In the garden town with only 50 persons to the acre the price of rail transport is naturally high, making necessary such attempts at cheap overhead railways as the Railplane. Corbusier has made it clear that the American tall building which is an outcome of competition and the desire for increased profits may, if controlled, become a street on its end, a rightly placed unit taking up only a small part of the room normally needed and so making open green spaces possible in the very centre of the town."

KEY: International words: *theater; restaurant; sports*. Additional words: *plan* (word used on special list of 50 for economics); *center* and *series* (international science terms).

EXERCISE IX. Sancho, Lengua Indian from Paraguay, and a character in Dana Sage's *The Moon was Red* (Simon and Schuster, 1944), describes himself in faultless Basic as "the brightest Indian on earth." Supposedly the product of a recent Harvard University experimental class in Basic English for foreign students, Sancho speaks Basic throughout the book—except, that is, for momentary relaxations in the syntax and the addition of an occasional non-Basic word. The fact that he sticks as closely to strict Basic as he does is to be explained, of course, by his creator's interest in dramatic effect. Actually, anyone half as bright as Sancho and in touch with native speakers

of the language would find it unnatural and unnecessary to crouch behind the protective barricade of beginning English. To all clear-thinking, language-conscious men like this one, Basic gives a head start which will launch them quickly into full-verb uses of the names of acts, into wholesale prefix and suffix additions to Basic word-roots, into the acquisition of handy little extras like *shall* and *can* and *must* and *many* and *few*, and into the adoption—with the help of *The General Basic English Dictionary*—of more varied and specific terminology at whatever points it may be useful. Reading and contact with English-speaking people are all they need. Their language remains Basic only in so far as it is reared on a firm foundation, a solid *base*.

The first bricks of his own particular linguistic pyramid you can see building in the samples of Sancho's "Basic" given below. Run through them, proofreading the excerpts to the extent that you underline every instance of digression from Basic to wider English that he makes. Question each point at which you think he goes outside the syntax of the system even though your lack of familiarity with its detail may leave you a little uncertain about it as yet.

1. Truly you are glad to see me go.
2. It's too bad that this should be so.
3. You wish to have a fight with me, Señor?
4. . . . although their desire has always been to do this in the Latin-American way.
5. He can become very hard and very angry when damage is done to his hopes of brotherhood—and then look out!
6. I must say this, Señora, that I've no liking for any white person but Don O'K.
7. We Indians will hold it in our memory until the end of time that in return they gave us death.
8. Always when you send telegrams by air you say please. Each "please" has a cost of almost 30 cents.
9. As your great and good father often said, it is easy to be happy.
10. You may be sure that this man is still angry and dangerous.

11. May you rest most peacefully.
12. As I am clothed now I would feel shame to be seen by our most respectable friends.
13. This man left Guagui and went quickly along the edge of the water until he came to Peru.
14. . . . or else this feebleness will certainly overcome you.
15. He has taken a chance on this valuable material.
16. No man is ever so misguided by another as by himself.
17. There will soon be no pure white blood left.
18. I'm one among many Indians with no knowledge where this gold is hidden.
19. He was like a bat in the night.
20. There are strange beings in the darkness, out of sight.
21. What is your judgment concerning this danger?
22. Do not be uneasy. You have likewise had your doubts.
23. The rain has stopped now, to be sure.
24. That was why he laughed. In our midst we see it every day.
25. Truly, I'm happy that my own hands are clean.

KEY: The sentences go out of Basic at the following points. Why, and what sort of necessary revision is available, you will be able to judge either now or by the end of this chapter. (1) *glad*; (2) *too, should*; (3) *wish*; (4) *although, always*; (5) *can, brotherhood, look (v)*; (6) *must, liking*; (7) *hold, until, return*; (8) *always, each*; (9) *often, easy*; (10) *sure, dangerous*; (11) *rest (v), peacefully*; (12) *feel, respectable*; (13) *left (v), along, until*; (14) *else, feebleness*; (15) *valuable*; (16) *misguided*; (17) *soon, pure, left*; (18) *many, hidden*; (19) *bat*; (20) *darkness, sight*; (21) *judgment, concerning*; (22) *uneasy, likewise*; (23) *stopped (v), sure*; (24); *laughed (v), midst*; (25) *own*.

We shall have more to say in the next chapter about the foreign learner—the usual beginner in a language, that is, who would like his task simplified as much as possible and will give only the time he must to acquiring a second language that is useful, if not essential, in his work. But our first concern is to complete

the technique of simplification for an English-speaking person, the second part of our initial task as set forth on page 15. As we pursue the detail of Basic sentence structure it is well to bear this in mind. Since, as Mr. Ogden reminds us, nearly a quarter of the human race already knows *some* English, those who can use it fairly fluently need not trouble to learn the grammatical rules which will at first limit the idiom of the foreigner. They know how to handle English. Provided they keep approximately to the vocabulary of Basic they will be largely *understood*.

That, for many English-speaking people; will have to be enough. They will learn to curb their vocabulary. And even when they don't exert any control over the words they use, the foreigner with a grasp of Basic English will be able to guess at much of what they say, and will make out, with the help of his *General Basic English Dictionary*, more of what they write. The operators of Basic are, after all, the language of the market place, and at least three-quarters of its words are likely to be within the vocabulary of a kindergarten child. When English-speaking people do grasp something of the technique of simplification that the word list makes possible and apply it where needed, instead of talking loudly or slowly or resorting to signs or a foggy recollection of schoolbook French or German or Spanish as the need may suggest, the outcome will be rewarding indeed. And should this lead them to correspond with foreign learners, to read here and there, or to write down some material for their use, Ogden's one-page expansion of the word-list rules for English translators will stand them in good stead. (*Basic English: A General Introduction with Rules and Grammar*, Kegan Paul, London, page 32.)

"(i) Use all the nouns (600), adjectives (150) and particles as in standard English, avoiding obscure idioms, far-fetched metaphors, and intricate word order.

"(ii) The usual variants from the sixteen Operators (verb-forms) and the seven Pronouns in the vocabulary are available; also Plurals, Comparatives, Adjectives used as Nouns, Ad-

verbs (in -ly) formed from Adjectives and the prefix un-.

"(iii) Noun forms can generate four derivatives: two nouns (-er and -ing suffixes) and two adjectives (-ing and -ed suffixes), where these are in use in standard English.

"(iv) Proper names, Mathematical and Metric Systems, and International Terms may be incorporated at discretion."

A list of the first 50 international terms (since slightly revised) is provided on page 71 of Ogden's text. For your convenience at this stage, although it is included among special word lists in the Appendix (page 110) the revised international list is reproduced below:

alcohol	orchestra
aluminum	paraffin
automobile	park
bank	passport
bar	patent
beef	phonograph
beer	piano
calendar	police
check	post
chemist	program
chocolate	propaganda
chorus	radio
cigarette	restaurant
club	sir
coffee	sport
colony	taxi
dance	tea
engineer	telegram (telegraph)
gas	telephone
hotel	terrace
influenza	theater
lava	tobacco
madam	university
nickel	whisky
opera	zinc

The serious student of Basic will find interesting and valuable the remainder of the book from which these rules are taken, with its condensed summary of the system to give an estimated 90 per cent accuracy in its operation (pages 34-42), for foreigners, and the more

detailed digest of grammatical principles that follows (pages 43-74). Any potential teacher of Basic, either native English speaking or foreign, will do well to study this last, as will students of English grammar at any level. Its explanation of the simplification of English syntax which Basic has achieved is illuminating, and so also is the fuller discussion of syntax in the *ABC of Basic English*, a handy guide covering all the chief points in the system as a first course in English, and written in Basic for translation into other languages. (French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Dutch editions of the *ABC* are already in circulation.) Then again, there is *The Basic Words* already mentioned, with its listing of the root senses of the 850 and their French and German equivalents, and its examples of all necessary and legitimate extensions and idioms—a gold mine for anyone interested in the subject of metaphor. And there is the *Short Account* which together with the English version of the *ABC* and a large selection of samples of Basic at work makes up the volume *The System of Basic English* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934).

But what of the interested person to whom these and the 100 or more additional publications on or in Basic are not always or immediately available? Through 15 active years the reference library has grown. Slight revisions have appeared in later printings of key texts. The war and the shrinking world have sharply increased an already growing demand for materials and for instructors and writers trained in Basic, even while paper shortages limit the supply of texts. The 50,000 copies of *Basic English and Its Uses*, for instance, the supply allowed for the English edition under paper restrictions, proved inadequate, almost at once, to the demand. Reprintings of key texts have met with delay through the same restrictions. Inquiries about Basic in the United States alone, as they come in to the Commission on English Language Studies at Harvard week by week, are indicative of lively interest in sometimes unexpected places. Not only educators but people in other professions are turning it to their use. Doctors and ministers, industrialists and advertising agencies, social workers, public

speakers, clubmen, army and navy personnel, many of whom have found answers to their questions about the system recently in *Basic English and Its Uses*, now want to get at the details. Their requests for instruction are being met by the organization of workshops and college courses using Basic at many points. Their demand for a single volume that will give them quick proficiency in the manipulation of the word list at a competent level has led to the compilation of this material.

The need for such a comprehensive question answerer for English-speaking people is clearly expressed, and in only recently acquired Basic at that, in a letter reaching the Harvard Commission as this handbook goes to press. Its author, an army major in a Pacific outpost, writes on "paper taken from the Japanese" and speaks at some length on the difficulties he has encountered in getting hold of answers to his questions. First hearing of the system six months ago in a broadcast from an Australian church where a reading from the Basic New Testament was being used, he assures us that only a keen interest in the simplification of language held him to his task. "Giving the right amount of credit to the hard conditions under which I am living and to the fact that I am quite a distance from bookstores in Australia, the United States and England," he comments, "still my experience so far is that what materials I have got [this included the *Life* article, October 18, 1943, the *General Basic English Dictionary* and *The Basic Words*, procured for him by his wife and reaching him only after a three months' wait] do not give ready answers to some questions which might well have been answered better from the start, without the need for getting a great number of Basic English books. I have given some of these questions in my letters to you. Such questions make one who is less interested than I am give up his interest."

The major's questions cover a range of detail. They concern:

1. The content of word lists in special subject fields. (See page 111 of Appendix.)
2. The problem of saying "Thank you" in Basic. (One of his own letters, in pleasantly

smooth Basic, starts out with "It was very kind of you to give me . . ." There are available other expressions like "That is very good of you," and comments upon the value of a thing or the fact that it is pleasing to get it. The beginner in English adds *Thank you* to his repertoire very soon, of course, when he is in contact with English-speaking people, just as he adds the English names of meals and sorts of food and clothing, and expressions like "How do you do?" (which, though made up of Basic words, is a double-starred idiom in *The Basic Words* for use at a later stage in foreign countries).

3. Whether the -ly adverb ending may be put on words like *earth* and *friend* in Basic (the answer is no) and on words like *surprising* and *marked* (derivatives) (the answer is yes).

4. Whether derivatives may be formed from international words. (Such derivative uses as *telephoning* and *dancer* are permissible. They will be as readily understood as *talking* and *walker*.)

His own competent handling of the Basic vocabulary, in a letter of well over 1,500 words, gives evidence of what self-instruction under difficulties can achieve when the interest is strong. But in its opening, acknowledgment is made to John Sweeney of the Commission "for pointing out in your letter of August twenty-first and in earlier letters some of the errors in my writing." This handbook aims at the same sort of service on a wider scale. The *do's* and *don't's* assembled for convenience on the pages following are not intended to give a beginner the impression that there is virtue in scrupulous adherence to fine points of Basic usage on all occasions. But if he wants to know them, here are answers to questions that may come up until he is familiar with *The Basic Words* and the *ABC of Basic English*.

Remember that for all ordinary purposes it is sufficient to keep to the word list, with legitimate recourse to: international terms; titles such as *king*, *president*, *empire*, and so on; proper names, and 12 names of sciences—*algebra*, *arithmetic*, and so on; calendar names like *Tuesday*, *December*; numbers given either as figures or in word form (75, fifth); names of

weights and measures and money like *ounce*, *centimeter*, *dollar*; onomatopoeic exclamations and words like *oh* or *buzz*; slang and technical terms in quotation marks, and any additional word that you need for some special purpose defined as you go along. That much and keeping to the 18 operators for your verbs will assure you 90 per cent Basic, and guarantee a clear, simple level of discourse on a rational, factual level. It is only for the beginner in English and for text-making purposes and early reading exercises that one has to comb the little language free from snarls. If all teachers, translators, and broadcasters using Basic are aware of these they can use their own discretion.

#### Reminder List of Basic Detail

1. DO use possessives as well as plurals of nouns and pronouns: *men's*, *their*, *ourselves*, *mine*.

2. DO use words as different parts of speech from those listed (except as verbs). Most such uses are occasional only, but here are some more common examples:

a THING as an adjective—a *light* color  
(but ~~a light touch~~, no)

a THING as an adverb—they went forward  
and *back*

a QUALITY as a noun—the *hollow* of his  
hand

a QUALITY as a directive—*round* her neck

a QUALITY as an adverb—it is raining *hard*

an OPERATIONS word as an adjective—  
her *little* finger

the number *one* as a pronoun—one does  
these things

3. DO use irregular forms of comparison as well as -er, -est: *more*, *most*; *less*, *least*; *better*, *best*; *worse*, *worst*; *farther*, *farthest* or *further*, *furthest*.

4. DO use -ly for *possibly*, *probably*, *certainly* as well as adverbs of manner, and spell variations like *electrically*, *angrily*, *simply* as in full English.

5. DO use *not* instead of *un-* for negatives of *regular*, *probable*, *dependent*, etc., till beginners are ready for additional spelling problems.

6. DO use *-er, -ing, -ed* endings on all nouns that will take them, to form: (a) two new nouns: the *whistling* of the *farmer*; (b) two new adjectives: the *damaged* end of the *sloping* roof; the end has been *damaged*; the roof is *sloping*. (Note particularly that 200 general names and 100 picturables, all that have the three endings in full English, are listed on page 88 of the *ABC of Basic English*, which gives a detailed discussion of their noun and adjective uses. Others, like *runner* and *running* which have no *-ed* ending, may also be used, but with discretion.)

7. DO use *-er* endings also on nouns and adjectives on the list which end in *-ing* (except *meeting* and *morning*).

8. DO use *-er* and *-ing* endings on six adjectives: *clean, cut, dry, open, separate, shut* (doubling the last letter where necessary as with *cutting, shutter*). Occasionally *-ed* endings are also used to form adjectives meaning "having whatever is named by the root-word" from words and compounds that do not take the other endings (*winged, dark-haired, half-hearted*).

9. DO use *-er, -ing, -ed* on *please* in the OPERATIONS column.

10. DO use any combination of words to form compounds if their meanings are clear from the separate words. International words, operators, derivatives may form parts of compounds: *postcard, overseer, beeswax, upside down, looking glass, good-looking, left-handed*, etc. A few others not self-evident but allowed for usefulness are: *anyhow, away, become, cupboard, however, income, inside, outcome, outside, today, somehow, upright, well-off, without*.

11. DO use extensions of meanings like the *leg* of a chair, the *seed* of an idea. Expansions from root senses are discussed in the *ABC*, pages 90-98.

12. DO use a narrowed meaning, or specialization, like *a chalk, a cloth, a paper, an operation*. A word may not have more than one specialization (*ABC*, pages 96-98) though expansions from the root sense are often numerous. (Note that some expansions and all specializations as well as compounds and de-

rivatives are included in an alphabetic listing of the word list in *The Basic Words*.)

13. DON'T use anything un-English. If it's bad English it's bad Basic.

14. DON'T use any but the 18 operators as verbs. This means allowing *He is laughing, It was produced*, etc., as adjective constructions but ~~*He laughed*~~ or ~~*She had produced it*~~, no.

15. DON'T use any prefixes but *un-* or any suffixes but *-er, -ing, -ed, -ly*. You cannot build words like ~~*personify*~~ from *person* on the list, or ~~*enforce*~~ from *force*.

16. DON'T drop off parts of words on the list to form new words from what is left. You cannot make ~~*know*~~ from *knowledge* on the list or ~~*read*~~ from *reading*.

17. DON'T form adverbs in *-ly* unless they are adverbs of manner. *Good, like, short, hard*, do not form adverbs of manner by adding *-ly*. Words thus formed have different sorts of meanings from *happily* (in a happy manner) and are confusing to the beginner.

18. DON'T use a Basic word in any sense that has no clear connection with its other senses:

*as* is not used for "because" or "while"

*back* has no clear connection with "backing a horse"

*ball* is not used for a "dance"

*base* is not a substitute for "bad"

*bit* may not be used for a horse's "bit"

*box* may not be a "box" on the ears

or "boxing" in a ring

*even* is not to mean "level"

*kind* may not mean "sort"

*lead* may not give "leader" of a group

*left* may not be used as the past form of "leave"

*light* may not provide an opposite for "heavy"

*liver* may not be used for an organ of the body

*match* may not mean "competition"

*measure* may not be used for "law"

*net* has nothing to do with prices

*present* is not a synonym for "gift"

*respect* is not an equivalent for "way"

*ring* may not be a ring of the bell

*scales* do not cover fishes

*start* is no equivalent for "jump"  
*stick* may not have anything to do  
 with sticking stamps on letters  
*table* is no substitute for "list"  
*that* may not be used in place of "who"  
 or "which"  
*will* may not express the idea of purpose

EXERCISE X. And now to put your Basic to the test. Work through the following exercise, revising at points where it goes out into wider English. You may find occasional sentences that are quite correct already, and you will certainly find others in which whole phrases have to be recast to get rid of a non-Basic word or two. They make a connected narrative, you will notice, though numbered for your convenience as separate sentences. Read the whole thing through before starting on the revision, since context will frequently have to be your guide to a Basic substitute for wider English words.

Take, for example, the very simple instance of the one non-Basic word in Sentence 1. In some contexts *town* would be too general a term to substitute. Some discussions might demand the distinction between great or important towns—or towns with episcopal sees or municipal governments—and smaller or less important towns. A glance through this narrative will show that no such distinction is expected here. *City* is *town* as opposed to *country* or *suburbs* as in Cowper's "God made the country, and man made the town" (and Cowper makes a 100 per cent Basic score!). Except for complete beginners who would find it easier to handle "to the town," the obvious translation here would be "to town."

1. Yesterday Mrs. Jones had to go to the city.

2. She went by road and returned by train.

3. While she was there she found that three of her friends had been waiting for her at the station two hours.

4. Someone had said that she would be on the morning train and when she wasn't on the first they had stayed for the second.

5. She could not get word to them till 11 o'clock, and then it was too late to see them.

6. The town was full of women shopping for Christmas.

7. There were no lighted Christmas trees this year because of the war.

8. Men in uniform were everywhere in the streets.

9. Mrs. Jones got some kid gloves for her sister and a new hat for herself.

10. It was raining when she came out of the last store, though earlier in the day it had been snowing.

11. "I must take a taxi," said Mrs. Jones to herself, "or I shall get wet."

12. When she was driving to the station she saw an old man moving slowly under the weight of a heavy burden.

13. He would have walked right into the path of the car if the taximan had not sounded his horn.

14. At her request the car came to a stop and she made a motion to the old man. He seemed surprised and put his great bag down on the wet ground.

15. "That is a heavy thing to put on your back," she said. "Is it necessary? Are you going far with it? What is it?"

16. "Oh, nothing much, ma'am," answered the old man. "But it is all I have in the world. I am going to my daughter's house. She will give me a bed."

17. "Why will she have to?" said Mrs. Jones. "Is something wrong? Where is her house, and why do you go over there in all this rain? You are wet through and so is the bag."

18. "I have nowhere else to go," said the old man simply. "I had a room in my sister's house but the house has been burned, and everything in it."

19. "What are they doing then?" By this time all thoughts of her train home had quite gone out of Mrs. Jones's mind. She was deeply interested in the old man's dilemma.

20. "They will get some insurance," he said. "But that will take time. The papers are burned. They have gone to a friend's house near by, but she has a great many children and there is no room for me."

21. "Well, do get in here," said Mrs. Jones. "You are as wet as you can be by now, but that is no reason why you should go on in the rain with all those things on your back. Put them in the front of the car."

22. The old man was very grateful. He could hardly get his great bag onto the running board of the car and the taximan had to help him, but at last the things were inside and he got in after them.

23. "Perhaps I can do something for you some day, ma'am," he said to Mrs. Jones. "This lift will make it possible for me to get over before dark. The house is on Pine Street in the North End."

24. "But that is across the river," said Mrs. Jones in surprise. "Were you going to walk all that distance? It would take hours."

25. The old man was silent. Where was the money coming from to get there any other way? He did not want to admit to her that he was penniless.

26. She wondered how she could help him. She would keep quiet until she saw what sort of house the daughter lived in. Perhaps she would be in a position to help him.

27. They came presently to a stop. There was some trouble ahead and a long line of waiting cars. The old man, moving surprisingly quickly for his age, took this opportunity of getting out of the car and, before she saw what he was doing, had motioned the driver to put down his bag.

28. "That was very good of you," he said quietly to Mrs. Jones. There was something in his manner that made it impossible for her to detain him. "The house is just around the corner," he said, and took up the great bag.

29. He was gone from her life as abruptly as he had entered it, and as unexpectedly. She had an impulse to send the taximan running after him or go herself. He might be in great need. What if his daughter was out? What would he do in this rain, and with no money in his pocket?

30. Whatever he did he would do without her help, that seemed clear enough. He had let her give him a certain amount of assistance but there was a limit to what he would take

from a stranger. She might as well go back to the station and get her train. She would be too late for dinner but food was the last thing she wanted anyway. The old man probably wouldn't get any food.

KEY: The numbers following correspond to those in the paragraphs above:

NON-BASIC WORDS	SUGGESTIONS FOR RE-STATEMENT OF WORD OR PHRASE
1. city	<i>to town</i>
2. returned	<i>came back</i>
3. found	<i>She got word, saw, made the discovery, news came to her, etc.</i>
4. stayed	<i>had gone on waiting, kept waiting, etc.</i>
5. could o'clock too	<i>was not able to by the clock—or omit a little late, not possible, there was no time to . . .</i>
6. shopping	<i>going in and out of the stores, with Christmas lists or parcels, etc.</i>
8. uniform	<i>military or special dress</i>
9. kid	<i>soft leather or skin (but no such detail as made from the skin of a young goat necessary!)</i>
11. must . . . shall	<i>I'll have to . . . will</i>
12. heavy burden	<i>under a great weight, with a great weight on his back</i>
13. walked . . . path	<i>got right in the way of, gone right in front of automobile, taxi</i>
car sounded	<i>put his hand on, made use of, made a noise with, got . . . working</i>
14. car ground	<i>automobile, taxi street (not earth, in town thoroughfare)</i>
15. heavy thing	<i>great weight</i>
16. answered . . .	<i>said, was the old man's answer</i>
world	<i>on earth</i>

17. over	(over, like right in 13, is a double-starred idiom but permitted)		in her mind possible ways of helping him
18. . . . else	no other place	until	till
19. home	back	. . . lived . . .	had, was living in, the daughter's . . . was
deeply	seriously would be clearer for beginners	perhaps . . . help (v)	She might be able to do something for him, She might be in a position to give him some help, etc.
dilemma	trouble		
20. many children	all the room is needed for her family, she has no space for me, she has six (or seven) in her family	27. presently	in a short time, after a time (-ly does not form an adverb of manner when added to present)
21. . . . can . . .	wet through, as wet as may be		in front (a- is not a Basic prefix), a long line of automobiles in front, etc.
. . . should . . .	for going	ahead . . . cars	years
car	automobile, taxi		chance
22. . . . grateful	touched; "that is very kind of you," said the old man; the old man said what a great help that would be	age	taxi or automobile
		opportunity	was motioning, had made a sign to
could hardly	it was hard for him to, it took two or three attempts for him to, etc.	car	face, behavior, voice, about him
		had motioned (v)	which
running board . . .	up to the taxi, onto the step of the taxi, onto the foot board	28. manner	keep him, say anything
car	(Though run does not take the three endings, running and runner may be used in clear contexts. Even so, the meaning of running board would not be clear.)	that (relative)	only a step or two now, round that turn, very near, I am almost at the house, etc.
		detain	
		just around . . . corner	
		29. . . . life . . .	He was gone from her as suddenly as he had come, Connections with him were cut as suddenly as they had been made
		abruptly	
help (v)	give him help		she was taken as much by surprise
23. perhaps . . .	I may be able to, I may have (or get) a chance to	. . . unexpectedly	help, do a certain amount for him
can			someone he had not seen before, a person outside the family, anyone but a friend (In Basic, stranger is the comparative degree of strange.)
24. walk (v) . . . ?	were you going . . . on foot?	30. . . . assistance	Her mealtime had gone by, There was no time for a meal
25. silent	made no answer, said nothing	stranger (n)	had any desire for
want . . .	he had no desire to let her see, he was not going to say		
admit	without a penny, had no money	too . . . dinner	
penniless		wanted	
26. wondered . . .	What would it be possible to do for him?, She kept turning over		
could help			

The key, as you will have noticed, makes no attempt to exhaust the possible alternatives at points where restatement is necessary. The suggestions given are sufficient to exhibit some of the devices to which Basic may resort. Sometimes a wider word at a higher level of generalization is all that is needed in the context (*dilemma* is a type of *trouble*; *kid* (in gloves) a sort of *skin*; *dinner* a certain *meal* of the day). Sometimes a more specific, narrower, less general term will do the necessary work, as with *taxi* for *car* (with a private car the reference might sometimes be made in terms of the make, e.g. *Ford*, *Oldsmobile*).

At points, even in a simple bit of narrative like this one, Basic forces one to be analytical in reaching a decision about which narrower term perhaps (what sort of *wanting*, a *desire*, or a *need*?) or in handling a descriptive touch in terms of details of appearance or behavior which gave rise to it. (How did Mrs. Jones know that the old man was grateful?) Very little experience of the pocket language is needed to show what a sharp little instrument it can be for separating facts from feelings, what is happening from the way it is affecting people. Basic cannot talk of a *taint* of this or that in the electioneering speech of a rival candidate but can substitute *suggestion*. It is not only adjectives in full English that are heavy with value judgments. It is amusing to use Basic in one's daily discourse for a bit, and see what an astringent it can be.

EXERCISE XI. Now go on with the writing of simple Basic. Try any or all of the following:

1. A continuation of the above narrative—another encounter between Mrs. Jones and the old man, perhaps.
2. An account of some experience of your own.
3. A description of the room you are sitting in, in terms of its Basic contents and characteristics.
4. A letter to somebody.
5. An account of the system of Basic English which might be made into a compact informative recording.

6. An account of the nature or structure or operation of anything else.

Here are a few extracts from straightforward Basic exposition, made in some instances by beginners with no more practice than these two chapters give in manipulating the small vocabulary. The first, an anecdote, is one of those not infrequent instances of "natural," accidental Basic, occurring in this case in a daily paper. The last, a summary account of the system, is one of Mr. Ogden's most recent statements about its design.

1. "I won't go on living with you any longer! I'm going straight off to mother, and won't come back again ever! So there! What are you doing with the telephone?"

"Only seeing about a train for you."—*That Wasn't Slow*; another title, in Basic might be *Sort of Quick on the Uptake*.

2. "If you have not ever been to Nantucket Island you certainly have a great experience before you. The six-hour journey down and back on the boat from Boston is interesting in itself, but you will not get the feeling of the island in a day. You have to put in a quiet week there, getting used to the old 'salt-box' houses and the narrow streets with uncommon names such as 'India,' 'Orange' and 'York.' If you do some reading about Nantucket's history of fishing and trading on all the seven seas before you make your journey you will get pleasure out of a walk on the waterfront, picturing in your mind what it was like in years past before the traders and their strong ships had been put out of business."—Tenth Grade Student Theme

3. "Best of all the instruments used in the war plants today is the 'Broach' (quickly-working toothed metal cutter). For record-time hollowing out of metal, cutting smooth curves, machining inside and outside forms, the Broach is an answer to today's needs in war industry. It is pointing to a future of even sharper limits in machining, greater output and a wider range of operations—a future which will see the Broach used in important developments in industry everywhere and the

producing of better goods in all parts of the earth.”—*Instruments for This Day and Tomorrow*, Lapointe Machine Tool Company Advertisement

4. “The sons of Israel have made an agreement to keep the Sabbath as a day of rest forever. The Sabbath is a sign of this agreement between God and the sons of Israel. For in six days God made Heaven and Earth and, ending His work on the Sabbath, He made it a day of rest.”—*Basic Readings*, by Elizabeth Koch Darlington

5. “New words are formed from some three hundred things in Basic by the addition of *-ing*, *-er*, *-ed* endings. Names of substances and materials as well as common acts may take these endings, the *-er* sometimes giving the name of a person doing the act or using the material (a *joiner*, a *painter*) and sometimes the name of an instrument (a *strainer* or a *stretcher*). A *duster* might be the person taking off dust or a cloth used in the operation; a *milker* a man or a machine. Then again, when an operation is named by an *-ing* extension, the connection between the person or instrument in question and a substance named by the root word may be different at different times. Dusting fruit trees isn’t taking dust off them as a rule, any more than dusting a table is putting some powdered substance on.”—*Five Steps in Writing Basic*, Orthological Committee, Cambridge, Mass.

6. “There is one group of evergreen trees which has red wood on the inside and white wood on the outside. I came across a stick of this wood cut for firewood and got interested in making something in which the white would be used for one part and the red for the other. The white wood made the hair and the red wood the body of a woman. It was simple work cutting the form, for the wood was quite soft. It took a beautiful polish. I made use of a knot of specially dark color for the face. The knot was very hard cutting, so there is but a suggestion of the face. From the side view you get a suggestion that the person is moving. The front view of the form seems to give a suggestion of balance. It is so thin from the front

position that it does not seem to be the same structure as you see from the side. To keep the form from falling over, I made a round, thin plate for a base.”—*Wood Forms*, by Erastus S. Allen

7. “It was put up in the time of Ch’ien Lung, the great Emperor, this beautiful example of the Mongolian way of building. You will see it today if you go to Peiping, the old Royal town of China. There, away from the noise and motion of present-day living, is a walled-in park, the Winter Palace where for hundreds of years, among the trees and grass and flowers, and under a bright red Pailou (special Chinese form of arch) of hand-cut wood goes a little twisting road, a road made of bits of colored stones in complex designs. This road takes you slowly from Pailou to Pailou, past houses and gardens, over a small slope, and from here to the edge of the water. Blue water, quiet water, its sides marked by a railing of white hand-cut stone, shaded by tall old trees, lighted by the stars at night, and in late summer, a mass of white and soft red from the Lotus flowers. And a little way back from the water, on a softly sloping man-made mountain, is the Dagoba. Its base is a Chinese house with a Chinese roof, green and gold, and on this is a round grey structure with a rounded top ending in a straight white point, tall and strangely beautiful. A simple building, with a simple history.”—*China Old and New*, by Pin Pin T’an

8. “For those who are meeting Basic English in this book for the first time, we give here a short outline of the system. A full general account for readers of English is given in the book *Basic English*, and a more detailed one for learning purposes in *The ABC of Basic English*. The last-named may now be had in most of the chief languages of Europe—French, German, Spanish, Italian and Dutch—and will in a short time be ready in all.

“Basic is English made simple by limiting the number of words to 850, and the rules for managing them to the smallest number necessary for the clear statement of ideas as conditioned by the structure of the language. That with so small a word-list and so little apparatus

it is possible to say anything desired for the purpose of everyday existence is the outcome of the special . . . system of word-selection, together with the great step—a step based on a natural tendency of English, and possible in no other European language of the present day—of cutting out ‘verbs’ (see *Basic English and Grammatical Reform*).

“The 850 words are in three groups—600 names of things, 150 names of qualities (‘adjectives’), and 100 ‘operations’ by which the system is, so to say, put into motion. Of these, 15 are the names of simple acts, such as *put*, which, with *be*, *will*, and *may*, are the only ‘verbs’ in Basic, others being covered by the use of one of these with some limiting word, chiefly the name of a direction or position (‘enter,’ for example, becomes in Basic ‘go in’). These 18 ‘verbs’ are used as in normal English, undergoing whatever changes of form are necessary in different relations. The same thing is true of the ‘pronouns’ *I*, *he*, *you*, *this* and *that*. As in normal English, the addition of *s* is made to the names of things as a sign that more than one is in question, and of *-er* and *-est* to the names of qualities as a sign of degree. ‘Adverbs’ are formed by putting *-ly* at the end of names of qualities; opposites, by putting *un-* in front. Three hundred names of things may take the endings *-er*, *-ing*, and *-ed*, producing two more names of things and two names of qualities, whose sense will give no trouble.

“Every word has a root sense, which may give birth, by simple expansion, to one or more further senses having a clear connection with it, or may have a special, limited use in addition to its more general one. All these are made clear in *The Basic Words*, where are printed, further, 250 fixed word-groups, or ‘idioms,’ which are of value chiefly in making the Eng-

lish of Basic smooth and natural. The expansions and idioms possible in Basic are limited to those listed, and the fact that a word is in the Basic 850 is not to be taken as a sign that it may be used in all the senses and ways come across in wider English. Fifty international words, about which the experts are in agreement, together with the English names of the days and months, are, like the number-system, looked on as a ready-made addition to the Basic store.

“So much for Basic as an international language for everyday use. For the purpose of science, the framework is, naturally, the same, and science for the general public has need of nothing more. . . . At that level, if special science words are necessary, they are made clear as they come in—a process which is of great help to the reader, and is made simple for the writer by the fact that the Basic words are those of special value in making clear the senses of others. But in writings designed for those trained in science, the word-list is increased by another 100 words covering the general language of science, and 50 more for the needs of any special branch. For writing or reading biology, for example, it will be necessary to have a knowledge of 1,000 (850 plus 150) English words. (The same is true for the Bible and for other special fields.)

“As we have said, for the expert there are thousands of international words which may be used more or less freely. At this level Basic is, before everything, an important instrument by which special word-lists, most of them international, may be put into operation.”—“The Basic Framework” in *Basic for Science*, C. K. Ogden, London, Kegan Paul, 1943, pp. 32–35.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# The Simplification of Grammar

DOES BASIC change English grammar? That is a common question asked, and the source of much confusion. When one answers, as it is tempting to do, with a summarily emphatic, "No," just what is meant? That Basic doesn't teach un-English ways of putting words together. It doesn't teach pidgin or any sort of bad grammar.

But if you mean by the question, "Does Basic change the rules for putting words together?" the answer is a partial, "Yes," in that it gives only some few of the rules that traditionally make up the grammar book of English. An English-speaking person reading the Basic rules may say, "But what about this, and what about that? Don't you tell them that *broken* on the quality list is part of the verb 'to break'? That *reading* on the list of general names is formed from the verb 'to read'? That when you add *-ed* and *-ing* to 'nouns' like 'walk' and 'work' you are really forming past and present participles of English verbs?"

Basic leaves such detail till a later stage. After all, people learned to speak and write their native language very effectively long before there were grammar rules to explain to them how it was done. Why let an elaborate grammar system, worked out too much on Latin models for English comfort, dictate procedure? Basic gives only practical rules that help a beginner to get results. It gives him a straight, an orthological start. It saves him from broken English by not teaching him verbs like 'break.' Even if he is prevented by circumstance from going on to wider English in good time, he can always handle pocket English grammatically with his Basic kit. And he can do this without having grammatical terminology mentioned to him at all unless you want to use it.

Compare this state of things for a moment with the more common opposite extreme. When the seasoned instructor in beginning English is introduced to Basic texts he will be surprised and then most likely pleased. "Now that makes sense," you will often hear him say. "I'm only expected to drill on 18 verbs." This comes as a relief from the average first-year course with its tedious memory load and endless opportunities for errors which the teacher must correct—errors like these, for example, in a piece on *Autumn* by a French Canadian boy who had been studying English not for one year but for five. (And his essay, at that, was better than the average performance in his class.)

At present the death season announces us that the winter season is coming soon. The winter is very interesting for the sports, but don't think at us only, let us look in our imaginations the poor families who will cold in that season.

The leaves who are fixed on branch fly away. They make conspicuous winding before fall down. The ground is covered of leaves.

During three months ago all is death. Many times the rain comes spread more this melancholy scene. In the street the automobiles and the street-cars water the people who go slowly to their work and they continue so quick. The sun who warmed again seems binded. Everybody thinks to enter the combustibile for this cold season and to buy the necessary clothes. In one month and a half everybody will be glad to see spend this tiresome season and after enjoy the winter during three other months more gay.

Me, I am glad to see come the winter because it procure me my favorite sports.

Him, he is equally glad, one feels sure, to see come the end of this essay because it procure him a chance to go back to his native lan-

guage and relax. If this is what he does in writing "English," when he can keep to one subject without interruptions and have a dictionary (very evidently) to hand and time to consult it, then of what practical use is his second language going to be? About as much as the French of the average American. And his neighbor is in an even more unhappy plight. For whereas you can see in the main from his paper what this first boy is trying to say, you feel uneasy with the other who asserts that "the fall season advertises each of us that the winter will nearly arrive." There is a rather disturbing finality to the second boy's "fall." Proceeding to a description of one particular autumn day before this winter which never quite arrived, he remarks that "the weather turned to the coolness," and then startles us into attention with these words: "A cold wind came to the city and hundreds of fall leaves climbed to the trees. Bear trees gave the city an appearance of melancholy."

What are the troubles of discouraged boys like these? It isn't words they lack. They have been encountering too many words too soon and in too confusing a fashion. The bilingual dictionary is their crutch and it lets them down. Thinking in French sentence patterns and converting the words seriatim into English "equivalents" will not work. However many English words you "know"—and cognates and a dictionary will help a French boy to spell out his *melancholy*, *combustible*, *necessary* and the rest, though it may not keep him from confusing homophones like *bear* and *bare*—you can't talk "English" in French idiom and go far.

The Basic beginner doesn't try to use *announce* or *advertise* until he can handle the plain verb *say*. He doesn't get beaten by *procure* because he sticks to *get*, by *arrive* because he uses *come*. Things *go up* and *come down* in Basic. You can send a film version of Fall into reverse but not the facts. "Fall leaves" just don't get out of hand and climb up trees. And water is kept in its place, too. Its place on the Basic list is among the nouns. Only experience with language teaching makes one see what manipulatory problems can arise with simple-seeming verbs like *water*, *look*, *think*, and *warm*, and what a sound plan it is to keep the

first two and *thought* to noun uses and their extensions in the system, and *warm* to an adjective.

On the other hand, teachers of language have grown so used to wrong past tenses of verbs like *bind*, to omissions of the verb *to be* in places where it is needed, to confusions over where to include the sign of the infinitive and the article and to the complete frustrations of beginners over the mysteries of the English preposition that they often don't believe such troubles can be avoided. They need demonstrations of the effectiveness of teaching texts like *The Basic Way to English* and *Learning the English Language*, with results too good to be explained away on the grounds that the teacher is an expert and the class particularly gifted or industrious. Naturally, students of the language who have had a bad start with English but know they have invested years of study in it at first may feel dismay at being turned back to a small vocabulary and simple sentences. But the more intelligent they are the more readily they come to see that drill with common statement patterns built up of widely useful words is what they need. An able surgeon from Peru will ask for three weeks of Basic structure patterns so that he can present a paper on obstetrics at the medical school where he is visiting. The medical terminology he has in common with the doctors he is to address. It is the framework of simple English statement that he needs, and he finds with relief that Basic can give it to him. It does with broken English what he can do with broken bones.

But splints and plaster casts are necessary only when something has gone wrong. Take the simple grammar of Basic from the start and this won't happen. Tie up your language with events and objects, and your beginner won't talk nonsense—or even write it. The *subject*, *verb*, *object* sequence of a typical English statement can be worked out in terms of *giving* and *getting*, *putting* and *taking* actual objects here and there. Manipulation of abstract ideas with fictions from the general list comes only later. If that seems childish, think back to moments of foreign travel and verbal vacuum, and the word order of the schoolboy's "other months

more gay." Such simple devices as postponing the use of an indirect object with beginners (he gave her the flowers) till they have grasped the fuller form (he gave the flowers to her) are well worth noting. Mr. Ogden's *Panopticon*, a contrivance of concentric cardboard disks, with selected lists of Basic operators, directives, qualifiers, names, etc., printed on the respective circles, builds typical English sentences for the gadget-minded beginner as he rotates the disks. It assembles the necessary units of the key sentence pattern of English automatically in their right order. Rotate the disks in turn and word substitutions change the nature of the statement while maintaining the structure. Anyone keeping to Basic and using a Basic text gets equivalent practice with all the essential patterns that he needs. A graded Basic approach eliminates guessing.

Grading that postpones irregularities prevents interference with learning. Nothing is difficult if it comes at the right time. It is possible to work out an effective order of detail for presenting the elements of English and to adhere to it so that learning is assured. The boldest feature of the grading of *Learning the English Language* is its postponement of all question patterns until the word order of widely useful statement forms has been established. The beginner learns to say clearly what and where things are and what he and others do, will do, and did with them (suiting the action to the word so that he is completely clear about it all) before any inserting or inverting throws him off his balance. Even the teacher doesn't use questions, but supplies him with models instead, from which he can go on building accounts of simple experiences in a gradually expanding nuclear word list. For any literate beginner the first book of 10 essential steps gives a smooth and rapid advance into practical, widely useful English in a vocabulary of 200 or so common words, few enough for him to pronounce and spell and use without any difficulty. Double the rate of intake of new words and you more than quadruple the probability of lasting mistakes as to spelling, sound, meaning, and construction. The rest of Basic, in the remaining books of the series, can be

explained largely by means of these early words, and the way out into wider English by means of Basic is then open.

The oral part of this same approach can be used, of course, with the not yet literate as well. But reading and writing are such passports to smooth transit in a twentieth-century world, and the confirmation of oral learning through use of them so much a part of language progress, that removing the barrier fast is the better expedient. The Commission on English Language Studies has found that a graded approach to the use of the alphabet in reading will speed learning in both writing and reading. Starting with Basic sentences composed with only seven different letters, it mounts the slowly expanding alphabet-in-action upon the barest skeleton of syntax in a text that exploits the use of visual aids to the utmost and eliminates sources of common confusion. *Words on Paper*, tried first on discouraged illiterates in adult alien education classes in Massachusetts and Washington, is finding its way into primary and remedial classrooms and schools and hospitals for the handicapped, into any group, in fact, whose special circumstance prescribes a gentle gradient and repeated confirmation of each presented point. Take any nonreader through this simple little book and on through the structure patterns of *Learning the English Language* and he has at his disposal a library of varied reading on levels ranging from *Pinocchio* to *The Growth of Science* and *General History* on the one hand, and the New Testament and Plato's *Republic* on the other, all in a controlled vocabulary that challenges while it confirms again, instead of confusing. (Two of the texts, *Keawe's Bottle* and *Basic for Business*, have already appeared in Braille; and *Basic English and Its Uses* will be issued through the Library of Congress for the guidance of the blind who want information about the possibilities of Basic techniques.)

This library of reading will be the beginner's practice ground. Basic is "a vestibule vocabulary," as Professor Sheffield aptly styles it in a recent examination of contentious criticism,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. D. Sheffield, "The Baseless Fabric of 'Basic' Criticism," *College English*, November, 1944.

"a medium lexically and grammatically streamlined for a communicative efficiency not approachable in any competing tongue." That great writings put into Basic may be intelligently used for beginners seems clear to him as to most. Any suggestion that they are competing with the originals would be ludicrous. He does not hesitate to remind scoffers, moreover, that the neutral character of the controlled vocabulary has its points. "The flat, demotionalized quality which critics have felt in Basic might be actually salutary in the life of our time. With radio at work night and day, belching propaganda into the homes of the world, the minds of men may be implemented for sanity by a common 'nuclear vocabulary of rigorous explicitness' as against 'all smuggled appeals to feeling put forth as statements of fact.'"

Basic is not only salutary but suited to the radio age. In a world where the possibilities of film and radio education remain relatively unexploited, its design assures it efficacy as a language-teaching instrument uniquely suited to visual and auditory aids. Experimental film and radio courses in beginning English already point the way to the wide usefulness of this practical working model in those fields. Its "rigorous explicitness" is evident at once. A beginner in English can have its meanings demonstrated so clearly that he gets a course in language as well as in *a* language. His thoughts are turned on how words work, while the words he thinks about and with are English words. Basic English and grammatical reform, as Ogden prophesied years back that they would, are beginning to go hand in hand.

Look for a moment at some of the essential sentence patterns in *Learning the English Language*, Book One: (1) *That is a man.* (2) *The grass is wet.* (3) *Two books are on the table.* (4) *The girl put her hat on her head.*

Reference to the world of experience will produce numberless names that could take the place of *man* in the first pattern. Basic limits its names of things to 600 and many of these are "things in the mind" (or fictional analogues). It is the rest, the visually demonstrable, that are chiefly used by the beginner in this pat-

tern. If you want to tax his memory you can teach him as many more of these as he will take. Thousands await him in wider English. Given contact with English-speaking people, he will pick up additional names for objects all the time. The learning of them is mere memory, not important enough to warrant attention at the expense of other things. The word *is*, least explicable operator on the list, will cause more trouble than any of them. The beginner is inclined to miss out the verb *to be*, this least functional of the Basic verbs, in all the first three patterns.

Then see what a range of things from the Basic list he could substitute in turn for *grass* in the second pattern—almost as many as for *man* in the first. Most things can get wet, though one would not mention the fact that water or any other liquid is wet, or think of fire as wet, perhaps, since water would put it out! Now keep *grass* in the pattern and see the range of substitutions for *wet*—every quality that grass may have or that you may think it has. A stalk of grass may certainly be broken, as a plate or a pencil may be. *Broken* can be thought of as a quality of grass as easily as *bent*. And so with other "participles," if you would call them that. The student has no difficulty later in fitting derivatives like *rooted*, *dropping*, *pulled*, *flowering*, etc., into this pattern, when he has learned to use the words from which they are constructed (*root*, *drop*, *pull*, *flower*, etc.).

Next take the third pattern. Substituting in turn for *two* and *books* and *on* and *table* will quickly show what factors in the world of experience limit the choice. Any number of books a table might hold will replace *two*, or if you prefer, such qualities as *small* or *good* or *old*. Change *books* and you are limited in your replacements to things that will go on a table perhaps, or are you? *Eyes* may be on the table in one sense and *thoughts* in another (more fictional analogues). These metaphorical extensions of *on* can be brought into play when the student is ready. But restore *books* to the pattern and you return to the physical world. If you try now to substitute for *on* you will find yourself limited by a few directives

which describe positions books may be in with respect to a table—*under* it, *by* it, etc.

The fourth pattern (*x* put *y* on *z*; gave *y* to *z*, etc.) will cover a range of operations. The work of every word in the statement may be made evident by performing such an act while describing it. Then the doer of the act could be changed, or the same person referred to by means of the grammatical accessory *she*. (Note that you change nothing in the world of events and things when you substitute *she* for *the girl*.) If *took* is substituted for *put*, would any other changes be necessary to keep the statement sensible? *Taking* one's hat somewhere on one's head is done, of course. It is so commonly done that one would rarely have occasion to comment on the fact. *Taking* it off the head is more often mentioned, or *giving* it to a *person* or *getting* it from him. Substituting appropriate words for *girl*, *put*, *hat*, *on*, *head* will show what factors govern choice in every case. The student must fit his language to experience as he knows it. Only practice on this key statement pattern with the simpler words on the list in their simplest uses will give him confidence and competence to proceed to fictional operations with *put* and *take* and *give* ("He gave much thought to his work") which metaphorically extend such relations beyond the physical world. "For Basic, four of the eight accepted parts of speech—Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs and Prepositions—are pointers with functional and fictional analogues,"<sup>2</sup> Ogden reminds us. We teach the functional before the fictional, and we get them operating smoothly in simple sentence patterns before we move on to less demonstrable structure units like "This is the place where he put it," or "When did the man say that?" or "He came because I sent him." *Where* and *when* and *because* are drawn from the lower left-hand column of the list discussed on pages 11–34. "The distinction between the parts of speech which name constituents of the universe and the grammatical accessories which enable us to fit them into the pattern of our thoughts is forced upon the student by the Basic classification."<sup>3</sup> When

he has learned to manipulate all the grammatical accessories in his left-hand column the Basic framework has been built. Adding special names in special subject fields, as needed and as their signification can be grasped, is then a simple task. Keep the new words to noun form and you have no more grammar to learn.

Much has been recently made of this fact with the instruction of foreign-language groups in technical subjects. Chinese Air Force units must be taught to operate planes by American instructors in Arizona and California. There is no common language of instruction and many of the technical terms have no equivalents in Chinese. Moreover, some of the students speak such widely different dialects of their own language that they have difficulty in communicating with one another. The solution is obvious. In three weeks of Basic instruction at Luke Field, Arizona, Chinese pilots may be given such a grasp of English sentence patterns that they are ready to start at once on their training in the air. They have been taught on an adaptation from *Learning the English Language* which substitutes altimeters and gyros for pots and pencils, used in the same sentence patterns, drilling the same operators and structure words.

Take a similar simplification of Tank Corps instruction for Chinese soldiers in India. Men who have had a few weeks of work on *The Basic Way* can use a Basic version of instruction manuals which simplifies their learning in a parallel manner. Technical terms are adopted sparingly and with Basic definitions where needed. Instructions such as "Tank units should bypass towns in which the buildings are of masonry construction," will read, in the simplified version, "Tank units are not to be used against towns in which the buildings are of brick or stone," and so on.

U.S. Naval Training Centers at Great Lakes, Illinois, and Camp Perry, Virginia, have found similar simple restatements effective with non-readers and slow-reading recruits. For non-English-speaking sailors, *Learning the English Language* gives needed language instruction; and with illiterates, *Words on Paper* gets read-

<sup>2</sup> *Basic English and Grammatical Reform*, C. K. Ogden, supplement to *The Basic News*, July, 1937, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

ing under way. Then, with the help of Basic, the *Blue Jacket's Manual* has been streamlined into a simple syntax and vocabulary for the use of men with a reading level of approximately the fourth grade. An explanation of the main characteristics of warships in Chapter V is handled in the simplified version in this way:

(1) *Size* (2) *Armament*—size and sort of guns (3) *Speed*—how fast a ship can go (4) *Armor*—amount of metal protecting the ship (5) *Watertight subdivisions* (6) *Cruising radius*—how far the ship can go (7) *Ability to evade detection*—to sail without being seen.

### The ensuing description

*Ships are typed according to the predominance or combination of these main characteristics in their construction. No one type has the maximum of all of them. The nearest to this ideal is the battleship, which embodies size, armament, armor, watertight subdivision and cruising radius to a maximum in its construction. . . . The sustained speed of battleships in the Spanish-American War was about 20 knots, in the last war about 20 knots and should be above 30 knots in this one.*

yields a simplified version which runs as follows:

Ships are built with these points in mind. No one type of ship has all these points. The battleship is the only ship that has most of them. The speed of battleships is now around 30 knots.

This version cuts out some of the detail while building up essential words through Basic or near-Basic restatement and replacing others by simpler language. The slow-reading English-speaking recruit need not be protected from familiar words like *type* and *can*, but he benefits from the breakdown of complex verbs like *maintain*, *demoralize*, *accumulate*, *jeopardize*, *indoctrinate*, *evade*, and *obstruct*, and fictional nouns like *precaution*, *inconvenience*, *alteration*, *acclaim*, and *evolution* which are all replaced as they occur in the text.

Or again we get the simplification of international advertising on a technical level. The Hercules Powder Company, for example, with new combustible and poisonous preparations

to be introduced to industrial plants all over the world, finds reliable translation of semi-technical instructions into many languages hard to acquire and harder still to check. Insecticides and varnishes are among the products this company is launching with descriptive booklets in Basic for world distribution. Words from the special science lists are used where necessary in instruction pamphlets, and trade names and technical terms are borrowed and explained wherever essential.

"*Insecticide* is the general name given to chemical mixtures for destruction of insects," reads the foreword to *Thanite* under the Basic caption *Quick Death to Insects*. "Among the most widely used forms of insecticides," it goes on, "are 'sprays' which are liquids made with a small amount of insect poison mixed in water or petroleum oils. In use, these sprays are forced by air pressure through small holes in the mouth of a spray gun, and come out in a thin mist or spray. This gets on flies and other insects, causing loss of the power of motion, or death. A spray's power to put insects down is named its 'knockdown' in the trade, while its power of causing death is its 'kill.' Good sprays are said to have high knockdown and kill. They may have, in addition, 'repellency'; that is, they may keep insects away from the places sprayed for some time after spraying."

Such developments follow the pioneer effort of several years ago of the Kollsman Instrument Division of Square D Company to put out a handbook of airplane instruments in the simple word list and syntax of the system with small vocabulary additions as required. *Wrenches* and *pin vises* and *suction cups*, essential equipment for the repairman's bench, are used in the Basic text and readily explained through pictures and diagrams.

A general account of the way in which Basic can be used for the purposes of science is given in Mr. Ogden's *Basic for Science* (Kegan Paul, 1943), successor to *Basic English Applied: Science* (1931). The book gives a sampling from the *Basic Science Dictionary*, now nearing completion, and lists of special vocabularies for the sciences reprinted in the Appendix of this handbook. It reprints extracts from scientific

writings at two different levels: (a) science for the general reader and the foreign-language beginner, keeping in the main to the word list, and giving Basic definitions of any additional science words that may be used; and (b) specialist writings in various scientific fields which make use of the general and special science lists. Both use, as international, Latin names for plant and animal families and formulae. *The Chemical History of a Candle*, of which an extract is reprinted in the next chapter of this book, illustrates an intermediate stage of difficulty in which only the general science list is used. Such writing is suitable for school-books in the subject and for the foreign student who has mastered the Basic framework. Confining the additional vocabulary in the main to substantive form keeps syntax problems out.

A small number of special expansions from the Basic list are recommended by Ogden for use in science (*Basic for Science*, page 45). For instance,

*cracking*—the chemical process by which the complex substances forming certain oils are broken up by heat, etc.

*earth*—electric connection with the earth

*firing*—process of making such things as bricks hard by heating in an oven

*level*—instrument giving a line parallel with the sky line, for testing if a thing is level

*lift*—lifting power of a machine

and special uses of *power*, *process*, *running*, *thread*. *Physics-chemistry*, *geology*, *biology*, *economics*, *mathematics* and *mechanics* have their extra 50-word lists of special vocabulary additions as well as these. International science words provide additional terms for the experts, though general science writing keeps to its vocabulary of 1,000 words (850 Basic, 100 general science, and 50 terminology of the special field).

Such, then, is the framework of simple English at expanding levels for every form of discourse, general or technical; "getting down to

the roots of the purpose and structure of language," as Ogden explains, "and specially designed as an instrument for the distribution of knowledge." "A polished instrument," Madame Litvinov calls it. It uses few abstractions, and keeps facts where possible away from feelings. Its poetry and Bible lists contain the most emotive words, and these are used in special circumstances. The birds and animals on the poetry list are *dove* and *eagle*, *hawk* and *lark* and *raven*; then *wolf* and *fox* and *lion* and *lamb*, with the more general additions *flock* and *beast*. Additions as always are to the vocabulary of Basic but not to the syntax.

With syntax growth the student, whether he is foreign-born or native, a beginner in English or a remedial or disability problem, moves out into wider English. Obvious steps have already been suggested. The near-Basic version of Plato's *Republic* will provide an instance. It primarily makes recourse to the embedded verbs of Basic, the 365 words among the 850 which will furnish additional structural freedom when the system has been mastered.

**EXERCISE.** Find the extra verbs in the following passage from Book VI of the *Republic*, and the Basic words from which they have been derived. Underline any other examples of wider English that you can find in the paragraph and see what connection they have, if any, with words on the list:

*Adeimantus*: "No one, Socrates, will attack any one of these points of yours. But, all the same, when you argue this way those who hear you feel like this: They believe that—with such small experience in putting and answering questions—they are being taken a little bit out of the straight line at every step of the argument, and when these bits are all added together at the end of the discussion, great is their fall—they seem to be saying the opposite of what they said at first. And, as players who are not good at checkers are shut in at last by the expert without a move to make, so, in this other sort of checkers, which is played with words, not with bits of wood, they are shut up and haven't a thing to say; and yet they feel this has to do with the words only, and they are

still in fact in the right. I say this with the present discussion in view. For any one of us might be unable to fight against you in words, question by question, but when it comes to facts, many will say that those who go in for philosophy—not as a mere part of education dropped while they are still young, but seriously—become, most of them, very strange indeed, not to say rogues, and even the best of them become quite useless to the state through the very thing which you have been praising.” (487)

Socrates’ answer to Adeimantus, coming later on in the Ninth Book (502), is perhaps

worth adding here as an appropriate end to an exercise on such a theme.

*Socrates*: “Well, what is anything to be judged by if not by experience, reasoning, and discussion? Or will someone name a better test than these?”

We ask no more than that Basic as a gateway to wider English be judged by these.

**KEY:** Full verbs derived from Basic words in the extract include *attack*, *argue*, *hear*, *feel*, *believe*, *add*, *fight*, and *name*. *Less* is used as a suffix on the Basic word *use*. *Checkers*, *many*, *philosophy*, *mere*, *rogues*, and *praising* are additional words.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# Translations into Basic

THE EASIEST way to develop versatility in the making of Basic translations is to look through a varied selection of passages rendered into Basic and to compare them sentence by sentence with their originals. The series that follows is graded roughly in regard to difficulty. You will get still more out of the exercise if you first cover up the Basic version of each extract and try making one of your own. First come some passages from books written either for children or for readers who have no very great command of the language. Two of them are from fairy tales in French. Then, after a contrast between Stevenson and Lamb, we pass to simpler exposition and to a more advanced popularization of science. After an interlude of narrative, we look through the Atlantic Charter and a Community Council statement

and then sample some current social-studies material from *The Reader's Digest*. Then drama has its turn, to be followed again by narrative, this time in the hands of Poe, Washington Irving, and Hawthorne. Finally comes the Report of the British Committee on Basic English as summarized by Mr. Churchill in the House of Commons.

In all these examples there are three things to watch: (1) the degree to which the main purposes of the original are being respected and preserved in the Basic version; (2) the naturalness of the Basic as a limited form of what is still normal general English; and (3) the various devices with which the difficulties of meeting (1) and (2) are overcome. Notes on some of these last points accompany the readings.

First comes a sample of Anna Sewell's children's book, *Black Beauty*. Note how much of it is in Basic already and how easy it is to follow the same sequence. A phrase-by-phrase translation is here in place.

*Original.* When I had eaten my corn, I looked round. In the stall next to mine stood a little fat gray pony, with a thick mane and tail, a very pretty head, and a pert little nose.

I put my head up to the iron rails at the top of my box, and said, "How do you do? What is your name?"

He turned round as far as his halter would allow, held up his head, and said, "My name is Merrylegs: I am very handsome, I carry the young ladies on my back, and sometimes I take our mistress out in the low chair. They think a great deal of me, and so does James. Are you going to live next door to me in the box?"

I said, "Yes."

*Basic.* When I had had my grain, I took a look round. In the box nearest me was a little fat gray horse, with thick hair on his neck and tail, a beautiful head and a questioning little nose.

I put my head up to the iron rails at the top of my box, and said, "How do you do? What is your name?"

He put his head round as far as his headband would let him, lifting it high, and said, "My name is Merrylegs. I am very good-looking. I take the young women on my back, and sometimes I take Mrs. Gordon out in the little low carriage. They have a high opinion of me, and so has James. Are you going to be in the box near me?"

I said, "Yes."

"Well, then," he said, "I hope you are good-tempered; I do not like anyone next door who bites."—Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty*, Macrae Smith, pp. 18–19.

"Then," said he, "it is my hope that you are good-humored; I would not be pleased to have anyone near me who has a trick of biting."—Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty* in Basic English, Psyche Miniatures, Kegan Paul, pp. 15–16.

The second and third translations, taken straight from Perrault, provide Basic versions amusing to compare, if you do not want to work from the French, with *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Puss in Boots* of the fairy-tale book. The original French is also supplied.

*Original.* Alors le roi et la reine, après avoir baisé leur chère enfant, sans qu'elle s'éveillât,<sup>1</sup> sortirent du château, et firent publier des défenses à qui que ce fût d'en approcher. Ces défenses n'étaient pas nécessaires; car il crût, dans un quart d'heure, tout autour du parc; une si grande quantité de grands arbres et de petits, de ronces et d'épines entrelacées les unes dans les autres, que bête ni homme n'y aurait pu passer; en sorte qu'on ne voyait plus que le haut des tours du château, encore n'était-ce que de bien loin. On ne douta point que la fée n'eût encore fait là un tour de son métier, afin que la princesse, pendant qu'elle dormirait, n'eût rien à craindre des curieux.—"La Belle au Bois Dormant."

*Full English version.* And now the king and queen, having kissed their dear child without waking<sup>1</sup> her, went out of the palace and put forth a proclamation, that nobody should dare to come near it. This, however, was not necessary; for, in a quarter of an hour's time, there grew up, all round about the park, such a vast number of trees, great and small, bushes and brambles, twining one within another, that neither man nor beast could pass thro'; so that nothing could be seen but the very top of the towers of the palace; and that too, not unless it was a good way off. Nobody doubted but the Fairy gave herein a very extraordinary sample of her art, that the Princess, while she continued sleeping, might have nothing to fear from any curious people.—"The Sleeping Beauty," in Perrault, *Tales*, London, Selwyn and Blount, 1922, pp. 22–23.

<sup>1</sup> The Basic translator omitted this, feeling perhaps that the whole plot of the tale made it unnecessary.

<sup>2</sup> King and Queen and Princess and Fairy are used as titles. The first three are listed with other words like President, Royal, College, and Dominion which come into special names used internationally. (See page 110.) Fairies

*Basic.* Then the King<sup>2</sup> and Queen, after kissing their daughter, went away, and gave orders that nobody was to go near the house in which the girl was. These orders were not necessary, because in less than a quarter of an hour, there came up all round the house and its fields and gardens a great number of trees, great and small, with sharp points and a network of branches; which all together made such a thick mass that no man or animal would be able to get through. Only the round tops of the highest parts of the house were now in view, and even those were only to be seen from a great distance off. There was no doubt that this was another of the Fairy's tricks, and that her purpose was to keep the Princess from being looked at by persons who had no business there.—"The Princess Who Went to Sleep for 100 Years," from *Stories from France* put into Basic English by H. Walpole, Kegan Paul, 1935, pp. 30, 31.

are too common in Perrault for descriptions to replace the word; and to be a Fairy is after all to have a certain rank and style.

*Original.* Le chat continua ainsi, pendant deux ou trois mois, de porter de temps en temps au roi du gibier<sup>3</sup> de la chasse de son maître. Un jour qu'il sût que le roi devait aller à la promenade sur le bord de la rivière, avec sa fille, la plus belle princesse du monde, il dit à son maître:

"Si vous voulez suivre mon conseil, votre fortune est faite: vous n'avez qu'à vous baigner dans la rivière, à l'endroit que je vous montrerai, et ensuite me laisser faire."

Le marquis de Carabas fit ce que son chat lui conseillait, sans savoir à quoi cela serait bon. Dans le temps qu'il se baignait, le roi vint à passer, et le chat se mit à crier de toute sa force:

"Au secours! au secours! voilà M. le Marquis de Carabas qui se noie!"<sup>4</sup>

À ce cri, le roi mit la tête à la portière, et reconnaissant le chat qui lui avait apporté tant de fois du gibier, il ordonna à ses gardes qu'on allât au secours de M. le Marquis de Carabas.—"Le Chat Botte," in Charles Perrault, *Les Contes des Fées*, Paris, Amédée Bédélet, Éditeur, p. 44.

*Full English version.* The Cat continued for two or three months, thus to carry his majesty, from time to time, game<sup>3</sup> of his master's taking. One day in particular, when he knew for certain that he was to take the air, along the river side, with his daughter, the most beautiful princess in the world, he said to his master, "If you will follow my advice, your fortune is made; you have nothing else to do, but go and wash yourself in the river, in that part I shall shew you, and leave the rest to me." The marquis of Carabas did what the Cat advised him to, without knowing why or wherefore.

While he was washing, the king passed by, and the Cat began to cry out as loud as he could, "Help, help, my lord marquis of Carabas is going to be drowned."<sup>4</sup> At this noise the king put his head out of his coach-window, and finding it was the Cat who had so often brought him such good game, he commanded his guards to run immediately to the assistance of his lordship the marquis of Carabas.—"Puss in Boots," in Perrault, *Tales*, London, Selwyn and Blount, 1922, pp. 32-33.

*Basic.* Puss kept on like this for two or three months, taking animals<sup>3</sup> to the king, and saying they were sent by the marquis of Carabas. One day he got news that the king was going driving with his daughter by the side of the river. His daughter was the most beautiful princess on earth. The cat said to the young man: "If you do as I say, you will become a great man today. You have only to go for a swim in a certain part of the river, and I will do the rest."

The young man did as the cat said, though he had no idea of the reason. While he was having a swim, the king's carriage came by, and the cat said loudly, "Help, help! The marquis of Carabas is in the river!"<sup>4</sup> At this cry the king put his head out of the carriage window. He saw that it was the cat which had been coming to his house so frequently; and he gave his servants the order to go quickly to the help of the marquis of Carabas.—From *Stories from France* put into Basic English by H. Walpole, Kegan Paul, 1935, pp. 59-60.

Stevenson is known to have kept his language in this next story simple for the sake of Islanders little accustomed to literary English. The first of his Pacific stories in prose, it appealed strongly to the natives of Samoa to whom

<sup>3</sup> *Gibier*, game. It is not easy to say exactly what "game" is in any language. (It would include larks in some parts of the world and definitely exclude rabbits in others!) "Animals for the king's table" would have taken the Basic a step nearer.

<sup>4</sup> *Se noie*, is drowning. The translator has used the context skillfully. When cries of "Help!" are heard and a man is in the river, it is clear enough what the danger is. Any heavy-handedness there would arrest the lovely magical flow of the tale.

it was addressed in a missionary translation under the title of "Ole faguaitu." Parts of the English version, which has the same straightforward quality as the Samoan, are not very far from Basic, as Mr. Ogden points out. Expressions like "a lockfast place" remind us, however, that Basic is a more modern language of a mechanized world, and does not hesitate to use a term like "safe."

*Original.* There was a man of the Island of Hawaii, whom I shall call Keawe; for the truth is, he still lives, and his name must be kept secret; but the place of his birth was not far from Honaunau, where the bones of Keawe the Great lie hidden in a cave.<sup>5</sup> This man was poor, brave, and active; he could read and write like a schoolmaster; he was a first-rate mariner besides, sailed for some time in the island steamers, and steered a whaleboat on the Hamakua coast. At length it came in Keawe's mind to have a sight of the great world and foreign cities, and he shipped on a vessel bound to San Francisco.

This is a fine town, with a fine harbour, and rich people uncountable; and, in particular, there is one hill which is covered with palaces. Upon this hill Keawe was one day taking a walk with his pocket full of money, viewing the great houses upon either hand with pleasure. "What fine houses these are!" he was thinking, "and how happy must those people be who dwell in them, and take no care for the morrow!" The thought was in his mind when he came abreast of a house that was smaller than some others, but all finished and beautiful like a toy; the steps of that house shone like silver, and the borders of the garden bloomed like garlands, and the windows were bright like diamonds; and Keawe stopped and wondered at the excellence of all he saw. So stopping, he was aware of a man that looked forth upon him through a window so clear that Keawe could see him as you see a fish in a pool upon the reef. The man was elderly, with a bald head and a black beard; and his face was heavy with sorrow, and he bitterly sighed. And

<sup>5</sup> *Cave*—"a stone hollow" might well bring to mind a rocky valley rather than a cave. To try too specifically to render "hidden in a cave" would be to lose the touch of

*Basic.* There was a man on the Island of Hawaii, to whom I will give the name of Keawe; because the fact is that he is still living, and it is necessary to keep his name secret—but the place of his birth was not far from Honaunau, where the bones of Keawe the Great have their resting-place in a stone hollow.<sup>5</sup> This man was poor, a lover of danger, and a hard worker; he was as good at reading and writing as a schoolteacher. In addition, he was a first-rate seaman, and had been for some time on an island steamer, and had taken a fishing-boat down Hamakua way. At last it came into Keawe's mind to see something of other countries and other towns, and he went as a sailor on a vessel going to San Francisco.

This is a beautiful town, with a beautiful harbour, and thousands of moneyed persons; and specially, there is one slope which is covered with great and important-looking houses. Upon this slope, Keawe was one day taking a walk with his pocket full of money, viewing the great houses to right and left of him with pleasure. "What beautiful houses these are!" he was saying to himself, "and how happy are the persons living in them, who take no care for tomorrow!" The thought was in his mind when he came up to a house which was smaller than some others, but complete in every detail and like a plaything made with loving care; the steps of that house were like silver, and the flowers edging the garden walks were a pleasure to see, and the windows were as bright as jewels. Keawe came to a stop, surprised at what he saw. He became conscious that a man was looking out at him through a window so clear that Keawe saw him as you see a fish in smooth water. The man was quite old, with no hair on his head, and a growth of black hair on his chin; his face was very sad, and from his

awe which is much more important here. Some of it, at least, is kept by "a stone hollow."

the truth of it is, that as Keawe looked in upon the man, and the man looked out upon Keawe, each envied the other.

All of a sudden, the man smiled and nodded, and beckoned Keawe to enter, and met him at the door of the house.

"This is a fine house of mine," said the man, and bitterly sighed. "Would you not care to view the chambers?"

So he led Keawe all over it, from the cellar to the roof, and there was nothing there that was not perfect of its kind, and Keawe was astonished.

"Truly," said Keawe, "this is a beautiful house; if I lived in the like of it, I should be laughing all day long. How comes it, then, that you should be sighing?"

"There is no reason," said the man, "why you should not have a house in all points similar to this, and finer, if you wish. You have some money, I suppose?"

"I have fifty dollars," said Keawe; "but a house like this will cost more than fifty dollars."

The man made a computation.<sup>6</sup> "I am sorry you have no more," said he, "for it may raise you trouble in the future; but it shall be yours at fifty dollars."

"The house?" asked Keawe.

"No, not the house," replied the man; "but the bottle. For, I must tell you, all my fortune,<sup>7</sup> and this house itself and its garden, came out of a bottle not much bigger than a pint. This is it."

And he opened a lockfast place, and took out a round-bellied bottle with a long neck; the glass of it was white like milk, with changing rainbow colours in the grain. Withinsides something obscurely moved, like a shadow and

lips there came the sound of a man whose heart is bitter. And the fact is that Keawe looking in at the man, and the man looking out at Keawe, had an equal desire to be in the other's place.

Suddenly the man gave a smile, and, motioning with his head, made a sign to Keawe to come in, and went to the door of the house.

"This is a beautiful house of mine," said the man bitterly. "Wouldn't you be interested to see the rooms?"

So he took Keawe all over it, from the wine-store to the roof, and there was nothing there which was not the best of its sort, and Keawe had no words for it all.

"Truly," said Keawe, "this is a beautiful house; if I had one like it for myself, I would be laughing all through the day. How is it, then, that you are so unhappy?"

"It is quite possible," said the man, "for you to have a house like this in every detail, or better, even. You no doubt have some money?"

"I have fifty dollars," said Keawe, "but the price of a house like this will be more than fifty dollars."

The man gave thought<sup>6</sup> to it. "It is sad that you have no more," said he, "because it may be a cause of trouble to you in the future; but I will let you have it for fifty dollars."

"The house?" said Keawe.

"No, not the house," was the man's answer, "but the bottle. Because, you see, though it seems to you that I have been smiled on by chance<sup>7</sup> and am very well-off, all my money, and this house itself and its garden, came out of a bottle about the size of a pint measure. This is it."

And, opening a safe, he took out a bottle with a round base and a long neck; the glass of it was white like milk, with changing colours in the grain. Inside, something was darkly seen to be moving like a shade and a fire.—R. L.

<sup>6</sup> The more general *thought*, in the Basic, doing duty for *computation*, keeps the smoothness and pace of the story with no loss of clarity. The man's next words show what sort of thinking he had been doing in the pause.

<sup>7</sup> *Smiled on by chance*. The translator has perhaps made

too gallant an effort to squeeze out all the sense in *fortune*. The dramatic movement is better suited by keeping the brevity and directness of the original. *All my fortune* and *all my money* are near enough to one another for the purpose in hand.

a fire.—R. L. Stevenson, "The Bottle Imp," from *Island Nights' Entertainments*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893, pp. 129–132. Stevenson, *Keawe's Bottle* in Basic English, London, Kegan Paul, pp. 9–12.

Our next extract is a contrast. The prose of *The Bottle Imp* is to the language of *Macbeth* much what the imp itself as agent is to the weird sisters. Lamb's language is largely Shakespeare's and therefore has a compactness of meaning which makes any Basic version look very thin—unless it is intolerably elaborated and overdrawn. This very compactness, however, to a beginner in English who is necessarily quite unacquainted with the play, makes for difficulty in reading.

*Original.* Now was the middle of night, when over half the world nature seems dead, and wicked<sup>8</sup> dreams abuse<sup>8</sup> men's minds asleep, and none but the wolf<sup>9</sup> and the murderer is abroad. This was the time when Lady Macbeth waked to plot the murder of the king. She would not have undertaken a deed so abhorrent to her sex, but that she feared her husband's nature, that it was too full of the milk of human kindness,<sup>10</sup> to do a contrived murder. She knew him to be ambitious, but withal to be scrupulous, and not yet prepared for that height of crime which commonly in the end accompanies inordinate ambition. She had won him to consent to the murder, but she doubted his resolution; and she feared that the natural tenderness of his disposition (more humane than her own) would come between, and defeat the purpose. So with her own hands armed with a dagger, she approached the king's bed; having taken care to ply the grooms of his chamber so with wine, that they slept intoxicated, and careless of their charge. There lay Duncan in a sound sleep after the fatigues of his journey, and as she viewed him earnestly, there was something in his face, as he slept, which resembled her own father; and she had not the courage to proceed.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Wicked* and *abuse* have a suggestion that man's mind is naturally against crime when not under the control of some bad power.

<sup>9</sup> *Wolf*. Note how this is treated in the translation *Wolf* is on the basic poetry list as a useful symbol. *Animals of the woods* tries to catch the implication here in a compact phrase. A Basic description would turn poetry into prose and make it look silly.

<sup>10</sup> *Not a hard enough heart*. This misses the positive goodness in *full of the milk of human kindness*—the great

*Basic.* Now it was the middle of the night, when half the earth seems dead, and men's minds are troubled<sup>8</sup> in their sleep,<sup>8</sup> and no one is about but the animals of the woods<sup>9</sup> and men with crimes to do. This was the time when Lady Macbeth was designing the death of the King. She would not have undertaken an act so shocking to a woman but for her fear that Macbeth had not a hard enough heart<sup>10</sup> to do such a crime. She was certain that he had a great desire to become King, but he had a strong sense of what was right, and was still not ready to do crimes on the scale which is generally necessary in the end for those who have so strong a desire to be great. He had been forced by her to give approval to the violent step, but she had doubts about his decision of mind; and she had a fear that his naturally kind heart (it was softer than hers) would come between, making the purpose come to nothing. So with a knife in her hand she came near the King's bed; having taken care to let the servants of his room have so much wine that they were unconscious in sleep, without a thought for their watch. There was Duncan, sleeping well after his long journey, and looking at him with great attention, she saw that there was something in his face which was like her father; and she was kept from the cruel act.<sup>11</sup>

bond between men. It is unjust to Macbeth by making him seem soft. The same note is struck in *soft* for *humane* lower down.

<sup>11</sup> Shakespeare's Lady—with her "Had he not resembled My father as he slept I had done 't"—does not say that it was lack of courage that stayed her hand. Lamb interprets. The Basic version refrains. It might have supplied an alternative interpretation with "She had not the heart to go on."

In these conflicts of the mind Lady Macbeth found her husband inclining to the better part, and resolving to proceed no further. But she, being a woman not easily shaken from her evil purpose, began to pour in at his ears words which infused a portion of her own spirit into his mind, assigning reason upon reason why he should not shrink from what he had undertaken; how easy the deed was; how soon it would be over; and how the action of one short night would give to all their nights and days to come sovereign sway and royalty!<sup>12</sup> Then she threw contempt on his change of purpose, and accused him of fickleness and cowardice; and declared that she had given suck, and knew how tender it was to love the babe that milked her; but she would, while it was smiling in her face, have plucked it from her breast, and dashed its brains out, if she had so sworn to do it, as he had sworn to perform that murder. Then she added, how practicable it was to lay the guilt of the deed upon the drunken sleepy grooms. And with the valour of her tongue she so chastised his sluggish resolutions, that he once more summoned up courage to do the bloody business.

So, taking the dagger in his hand, he softly stole in the dark to the room where Duncan lay; and as he went, he thought he saw another dagger in the air, with the handle towards him, and on the blade and at the point of it drops of blood; but when he tried to grasp it, it was nothing but air, a mere phantasm proceeding from his own hot and oppressed brain and the business he had in hand.—“Macbeth,” in Charles and Mary Lamb, *Tales from Shakespeare*, Winston, 1924, pp. 151–153.

Lady Macbeth saw that in this trouble of mind, Macbeth was being guided by his better self, and making a decision to do no more. But she, being a woman not readily turned from her cruel purpose, now put her thoughts into strong words, causing him to be moved by the same feelings as herself, and gave a number of reasons why he would be wise to go on with his undertaking; how simple the act was; how quickly it would be done; and how the events of one short night would give to all their nights and days to come the power and authority of King and Queen!<sup>12</sup> Then she did her best to give him a sense of shame for his change of purpose, saying he was feeble and full of fear; and she said that she had given her milk to a baby, and had had the sweet experience of loving the baby which took her milk, but she would, while it was smiling in her face, have taken it from her, and given it its death-blow, if she had undertaken to do it, as he had to put the King to death. And, she went on, it would not be hard to make the sleeping servants, who were overcome by drink, seem responsible for the crime. Whipped by her angry words, his decision again became strong enough for him to go through with the cruel business.

So, taking the knife in his hand, he softly went in the dark to the room where Duncan was sleeping; and when he went, it seemed to him that he saw another knife in the air, with the blade turned from him, and on the point of it drops of blood: but when he made an attempt to take it, it was nothing but air, only a fiction caused by his heated and troubled brain and the business he had in hand.—“Macbeth,” in T. Takata, *Lamb's Stories from Shakespeare* put into Basic English, Kegan Paul, 1932, pp. 13–14, 15–16.

Here below is the easiest writing yet to put into Basic—truly simple fully expanded narrative.

*Original.* They didn't realize that by means of electricity immense wheels were someday to turn smoothly, enormous weights lift easily. They had never seen a gay electric sign flashing

*Basic.* They had no idea that with the help of electric current great wheels would one day be turning smoothly, great weights be lifted without any trouble. They had never seen a argument more readily.

<sup>12</sup> Here the Basic version serves the exposition of the

on and off in a spatter of green, scarlet, yellow and blue. To them electricity was a mysterious riddle, more baffling than anything of which they had ever heard. Tonight they were telling each other of how, if you wrapped a coil of wire around a piece of soft iron, you could make a magnet of it; and of how, long before, Benjamin Franklin had sent an electric current through a coiled wire seven miles in length.

Suddenly one of them, a young man, tall and handsome, began to speak with such conviction that the whole company leaned forward to catch his words.

"Why,<sup>13</sup> gentlemen," he said, as he rose and strode up and down the room, "I tell you, it means a revolution in the world. If I can drive an electrical impulse through a length of copper wire and send it far enough, I'll girdle the world like Puck. I'll talk with the Cham of Tartary as easily as I talk with you."

That young man was Mr. Samuel Finley Breese Morse. His family called him Finley, and his mother's name was Breese. He was the man who invented the telegraph.—Stout, *Wires Round the World*, Thomas Nelson and Sons, pp. 2-3.

There seems to be a certain harmony between Franklin and Basic. He would have been quick to see its uses.

*Original.* As a great part of our life is spent in sleep, during which we have sometimes pleasing, and sometimes painful dreams, it becomes of some consequence to obtain the one kind, and avoid the other; for whether real or imaginary, pain is pain, and pleasure is pleasure. If we can sleep without dreaming, it is well that painful dreams are avoided. If, while we sleep, we can have pleasing dreams, it is, as

bright electric sign going on and off in bursts of green, red, yellow, and blue. To them, electric power was a strange new thing, the strangest thing they had ever come across. Tonight they were saying how, if you put a twist of wire round and round a bit of soft iron, it would be given the power of attraction, or, in other words, become a "magnet";<sup>14a</sup> and they were talking of how, long before, Benjamin Franklin had sent an electric current through a twisted<sup>15</sup> wire seven miles long.

Suddenly one of them, a young man, tall and good-looking, took up the discussion with such an air of authority that all heads were bent forward to get his words.

"My friends,"<sup>13</sup> he said, getting up and walking up and down the room, "I say that all our ways of living will be completely changed by it. If it is possible to send an electric impulse through a copper wire, and send it far enough, I'll put a circle round the earth like Puck. I'll be talking to the Cham of Tartary with no more trouble than I am talking to you."

That young man was Mr. Samuel Finley Breese Morse. Breese was his mother's name. The name given to him by his family was Finley. He was the man responsible for the invention of the "telegraph,"<sup>14b</sup> the apparatus by which telegrams are sent.—Stout, *Wires Round the Earth* in Basic English, Thomas Nelson and Sons, pp. 9-10.

*Basic.* In view of the fact that a great part of our existence is given to sleep, in which we sometimes have pleasing and sometimes troubling experiences, it becomes important to see that we have the one sort, and keep clear of the other; because, even when it has existence only in our minds, pain is pain, and pleasure is pleasure. If we may go to sleep without being conscious of anything, it is good that we are

<sup>13</sup> Though *why* is a Basic word, this idiomatic use is beyond the understanding of a beginner, and so dropped in the Basic version.

<sup>14a, 14b</sup> Examples of definitions inserted (<sup>14a</sup>) before and

(<sup>14b</sup>) after the non-Basic word. Another alternative, too formal for either of these, is the footnote.

<sup>15</sup> Note how the Basic relies on content to interpret *twisted* here as *twisted round and round*, or *coiled*.

the French say, *tante gagné*, so much added to the pleasure of life.

To this end it is, in the first place, necessary to be careful in preserving health, by due exercise, and great temperance; for, in sickness, the imagination is disturbed; and disagreeable, sometimes terrible ideas are apt to present themselves. Exercise should precede meals, not immediately follow them; the first promotes, the latter, unless moderate, obstructs digestion. If, after exercise, we feed sparingly, the digestion will be easy and good, the body lightsome, the temper cheerful, and all the animal functions performed agreeably. Sleep, when it follows, will be natural and undisturbed.—“The Art of Procuring Pleasant Dreams,” *Works of the Late Dr. Benjamin Franklin*, vol. ii, Essays, Humorous, Moral and Literary, London, printed for Longman, Hearst, Rees and Orme, 1806, p. 25.

*The Chemical History of a Candle*, in translation, as Mr. Ogden points out in *Basic for Science*, page 52, gives an example of the use of the general science list (for terms like *compound*, *solution*, *tube*) in simple teaching material. It draws sparingly also on the 50-word physics-chemistry supplement list (see Appendix, p. 112) but keeps to the simplest international level possible in writing on such a subject.

*Original*. You may see this by taking a lighted candle,<sup>16</sup> and putting it in the sun so as to get its shadow thrown on a piece of paper. How remarkable it is that that thing which is light enough to produce shadows of other objects can be made to throw<sup>17</sup> its own shadow on a piece of white paper or card, so that you can actually see streaming round the flame something which is not part of the flame, but is ascending and drawing the flame upward. Now I am going to imitate the sunlight by applying the voltaic battery to the electric lamp. You now see our sun and its great luminosity; and by placing a candle between it and the screen, we get the shadow of the flame. You observe the shadow of the candle and of the wick;

untroubled. If, while sleeping, we are able to have any pleasing experiences, it is so much more of the pleasure of existence.

To do this, it is necessary, in the first place, to take care to keep healthy, by having the muscles in good condition, and by not taking overmuch food and drink. When one is ill, the mind is troubled; and unpleasing, sometimes shocking, ideas have the tendency to come into it. The right time for physical work is before meals, not the minute after them. The one is good for the digestion, the other, if overdone, is bad for it. If, after working our muscles, we have a small meal, digestion will be good, we will be in a happy condition of mind, and the body will have a bright, elastic feeling and will do its work without any trouble. Sleep, when it comes, will be natural and untroubled.—C. K. Ogden, “On the Art of Sleep,” *Wise Words of an Early American . . . from the writings of Benjamin Franklin*, Kegan Paul, 1935, pp. 67–68.

*Basic*. You may see this by taking a lighted candle<sup>16</sup> and putting it in the sun so that its form may be seen on a bit of paper. How surprising it is that a thing which gives enough light to make shades of other things, will, under some conditions, give<sup>17</sup> a shade itself on a bit of white paper or card; so that you are able to see streaming round the flame something which is not part of the flame, but which is going up and stretching the flame out. Now I am going to make something like sunlight by turning on the electric light. You now see our sun and its great light-giving power; and by putting a candle between it and a bit of cardboard, we get a shade of the flame. You see the form of the candle and the cotton. Then there

<sup>16</sup> *Candle*. As naming the subject matter of the book, a definition of this word has been given early.

<sup>17</sup> It is a nice question whether the source of the light

or the occulting object *throws* the shadow. This reads as though the candle did both at once. *Basic* escapes the problem with the word *give*.

then there is a darkish part, as represented in the diagram, and then a part which is more distinct. Curiously enough, however, what we see in the shadow as the darkest part of the flame is, in reality, the brightest part; and here you see streaming upward the ascending current of hot air, as shown by Hooker, which draws out the flame, supplies it with air, and cools the sides of the cup of melted fuel.

I can give you here a little further illustration, for the purpose of showing you how flame goes up or down according to the current. I have here a flame—it is not a candle flame—but you can, no doubt, by this time generalize enough to be able to compare one thing with another; what I am about to do is to change the ascending current that takes the flame upward into a descending current. This I can easily do by the little apparatus you see before me. The flame, as I have said, is not a candle flame, but it is produced by alcohol,<sup>18</sup> so that it shall not smoke too much. I will also color the flame with another substance,\* so that you may trace its course; for, with the spirit alone, you could hardly see well enough to have the opportunity of tracing its direction. By lighting this spirit of wine we have then a flame produced, and you observe that when held in the air it naturally goes upward. You understand now, easily enough, why flames go up under ordinary circumstances: it is because of the draught of air by which the combustion is formed. But now, by blowing the flame down, you see I am enabled to make it go downward into this little chimney,<sup>19</sup> the direction of the current being changed. Before we have concluded this course of lectures we shall show you a lamp in which the flame goes up and the smoke goes down, or the flame goes down and the smoke goes up. You see, then, that we have the power in this way of varying the flame in different directions.—Michael Faraday, *The Chemical History of a Candle*, Harper, 1861, pp. 31–34.

\* The alcohol had chloride of copper dissolved in it: this produces a beautiful green flame.

<sup>18</sup> Note that the term is kept in the Basic version with its chemical formula added. *Alcohol* is one of the few science words included on the international list.

is a dark part, as you see in the picture, and then a part which is clearer. It may seem surprising, but what we see in the shade as the darkest part of the flame is, in fact, the brightest part; and here you see the current of heated air streaming up (as in Hooker's picture), stretching out the flame, giving it air and keeping cold the sides of the cup of liquid fat.

I will give you here another example, to let you see how the flame goes up or down when the current is moved up or down. I have here a flame—it is not a candle flame—but you have, no doubt, by this time, enough general ideas to make a comparison between one thing and another. What I am going to do is to make the up-going current which takes the flame up into a down-going current. I am able to do this by using the apparatus you see in front of me. The flame, as I have said, is not a candle flame, but it is produced by alcohol<sup>18</sup> ( $C_2H_5OH$ ), which will not give so much smoke. In addition, I will put another substance \* into the flame to give it colour, so that you may see the direction it takes: with alcohol only you would not see well enough the direction it takes. By putting a light to this alcohol we have got a flame; and it naturally goes up in the air. It is clear to you now why flames go up under normal conditions—it is because of the current of air formed while burning is going on. But now, by blowing on it, the flame is sent down into the tube<sup>19</sup>—because the direction of the current has been changed. You see, then, that in this way we are able to make the flame go in different directions.—Michael Faraday, *The Chemical History of a Candle* put into Basic by Phyllis Rossiter, Kegan Paul, 1933, pp. 27–29.

\* The alcohol had copper chloride ( $CuCl_2$ ) in it: this makes the flame a beautiful green colour.

<sup>19</sup> *Pipe* would have done for the general readers, but young chemists-to-be may well learn the word *tube*. It is part of the general science vocabulary.

*Original.* Of course tall land animals have other difficulties. They have to pump their blood to greater heights than a man and, therefore, require a larger blood pressure and tougher blood-vessels. A great many men die from burst arteries, especially in the brain, and this danger is presumably still greater for an elephant<sup>20</sup> or a giraffe.<sup>21</sup> But animals of all kinds find difficulties in size for the following reason. A typical small animal, say a microscopic<sup>22</sup> worm or rotifer, has a smooth skin through which all the oxygen it requires can soak in, a straight gut with sufficient surface to absorb its food, and a simple kidney.<sup>23</sup> Increase its dimensions tenfold in every direction, and its weight is increased a thousand times, so that if it is to use its muscles as efficiently as its miniature counterpart, it will need a thousand times as much food and oxygen per day and will excrete a thousand times as much of waste products.

Now if its shape is unaltered its surface will be increased only a hundredfold, and ten times as much oxygen must enter per minute through each square millimetre of skin, ten times as much food through each square millimetre of intestine. When a limit is reached to their absorptive powers their surface has to be increased by some special device. For example, a part of the skin may be drawn out into tufts to make gills<sup>23</sup> or pushed in to make lungs,<sup>23</sup> thus increasing the oxygen-absorbing surface in proportion to the animal's bulk. A man, for example, has a hundred square yards of lung. Similarly, the gut, instead of being smooth and straight, becomes coiled and develops a velvety surface, and other organs increase in complication. The higher animals are not larger than the lower because they are more complicated. They are more complicated because they are larger. Just the same is true of plants. The simplest plants, such as the green algae growing in stagnant water or on the bark of trees, are mere round cells. The higher plants in-

*Basic.* Naturally, tall land animals have other troubles. Their blood has to be forced up higher than a man's so they have to have a greater force of blood and stronger blood-vessels. Death is caused in a great number of men by the bursting of blood-vessels, specially in the brain, and no doubt this danger is even greater for an elephant<sup>20</sup> or a giraffe.<sup>21</sup> But animals of all sorts have troubles about size, for another reason. A representative small animal, say a worm so small that it is only possible to see it with a microscope,<sup>22</sup> has a smooth skin through which all the necessary oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>) goes, a straight stomach-pipe which will take in all the necessary food, and a simple kidney.<sup>23</sup> Make it ten times greater in every direction, and its weight is increased a thousand times, so that if it is to make as good use of its muscles as it did before, it has to take in a thousand times as much food and oxygen in a day and give out a thousand times as much waste material.

But if its form is not changed, its skin will be only a hundred times greater, and ten times as much oxygen will have to get through every square millimetre of skin every minute, and ten times as much food through every square millimetre of wall of the digestion pipe. When it gets to the limit of what the body-structure is able to take up in this way, its size has to be increased by some special adjustment. For example, a part of the skin may be pulled out to make the breathing-parts of fishes,<sup>23</sup> or pushed in to make the breathing-parts<sup>23</sup> of land animals, so that the animal is able to take in more oxygen in relation to its size. A man, for example, has a hundred square yards of breathing apparatus. In the same way, the stomach-wall, at first smooth and straight, gets twisted round and round and becomes rough, and other parts become complex. The higher animals are not greater in size than the lower because they are more complex. They are more complex because they are greater in size. And the same is true of plants. The simplest plants,

<sup>20</sup> *Elephant*, defined earlier as "the greatest living land animal," and after that adopted.

<sup>21</sup> *Giraffe*, described in detail before being adopted.

<sup>22</sup> Note the Basic use of *microscope* (international sci-

ence vocabulary; see Appendix, p. 111) in translating this.

<sup>23</sup> *Kidney*, *gill* and *lung* are on the biology list, but the translator here is keeping his additions down as low as possible and can well do without the two latter.

crease their surface by putting out leaves and roots. Comparative anatomy is largely the story of the struggle to increase surface in proportion to volume.—J. B. S. Haldane, "On Being the Right Size," in *Possible Worlds*, Harper, pp. 22–23.

*Original.* It happened one time <sup>24</sup> that going a-fishing with him in a calm morning, a fog rose so thick, that though we were not half a league <sup>25</sup> from the shore, we lost sight of it; <sup>26</sup> and rowing, we knew not whither, or which way, we laboured all day and all the next night; and when the morning came, we found we had pulled off to sea, instead of pulling in for the shore, and that we were at least two leagues from the land: however, we got well in again, though with a great deal of labour, and some danger, for the wind began to blow pretty fresh in the morning: but, particularly, we were all very hungry.—Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, Collins, p. 34.

such as the very small green ones living in quiet water or on the outside of trees, are no more than round units of living substance. The higher plants make their outside part greater in relation to their size by putting out leaves and roots. The account of the structures of different living bodies is in great part the history of the attempt to make square measure greater in relation to solid measure.—J. B. S. Haldane, "On Being the Right Size," in *The Outlook of Science in Basic English*, Psyche Miniatures, pp. 48–50.

*Basic.* It came about one time <sup>24</sup> that when we had gone fishing on a quiet morning, such a thick mist came up that, though we were not a mile and a half <sup>25</sup> from the land, we were unable to see it.<sup>26</sup> Without any knowledge of where, or even which way we were going, we went on in the boat all that day and all the night after.

When the morning came, we saw that we had been pulling out to sea, and not in to the land, and that we were at least six miles from it. We got back again after much hard work and some danger, because the wind became quite strong in the morning; but, more than anything, we all had a great desire for food.—Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* put into Basic by T. Takata, Kegan Paul, 1933, pp. 19–20.

The following note by Mr. Desmond MacCarthy in *The Sunday Times* (London) of June 18, 1944, may be of interest:

"*Midshipman Easy* in Basic read more like a *conte* by Voltaire than a story by Marryat. In a sense it was better written, but the spirit of it was completely changed. Gone was the hearty, boyish, careless, gallant tone; that genial man-of-action humour, which makes light of violence and pain without excluding sympathy, had turned into a sort of detached irony!" He continues, "Basic is not a medium favourable to the creative or personal imagination. On the other hand it is a help towards mastering the kind of prose most suitable for matter-of-fact description (the passport photograph) or the exposition of semi-abstract themes."

These just and acute remarks may be contrasted with such careless assertions as the following made by Mr. Jacques Barzun: "To obtain Basic we reduce abstract to concrete."

<sup>24</sup> *One time.* Basic follows Defoe here. Notice the removal of what purists today would object to as a dangling participle in the subsequent construction.

<sup>25</sup> *Half a league.* The old measure is put into modern terms.

<sup>26</sup> Note how Defoe's sentence has been broken up and its parts rearranged to be clearer for a beginner.

*Original.* He proceeded to climb one of the carronades, and lean over the hammocks<sup>27</sup> to gaze on the distant land.

"Young gentleman, get off those hammocks," cried the master, who was officer of the watch, in a surly tone.

Jack looked round.

"Do you hear me, sir? I'm speaking to you," said the master again.

Jack felt very indignant, and he thought that politeness was not quite so general as he supposed.

It happened that Captain Wilson was upon deck.

"Come here, Mr. Easy," said the captain. "It is a rule in the service, that no one gets on the hammocks, unless in case of emergency—I never do—nor the first lieutenant—nor any of the officers or men,—therefore, upon the principle of equality, you must not do it either."

"Certainly not, sir," replied Jack, "but still I do not see why that officer in the shining hat should be so angry, and not speak to me as if I were a gentleman,<sup>28</sup> as well as himself."

"I have already explained that to you, Mr. Easy."

"O yes, I recollect now, it's zeal; but this zeal appears to me to be the only unpleasant thing in the service. It's a pity, as you said, that the service cannot do without it."

Captain Wilson laughed, and walked away, and shortly afterwards, as he turned up and down the deck with the master, he hinted to him, that he should not speak so sharply to a lad who had committed such a trifling error, through ignorance. Now Mr. Smallsole, the master, who was a surly sort of a personage, and did not like even a hint of disapprobation of his conduct, although very regardless of the feeling of others,<sup>29</sup> determined to pay this off on Jack, the very first convenient opportunity.

Jack dined in the cabin, and was very much

*Basic.* To get a better view of the land in the distance, he got up on one of the guns.

"Young man, get off that gun," said the officer of the watch in an angry voice.

Jack gave him a look.

"Get down, sir—I'm talking to you," said the officer roughly.

His way of talking gave Jack a shock; but Captain Wilson was on deck. "Come here, Mr. Easy," said the captain. "It is a rule in the navy that no one is to get on those guns—I don't and the first officer doesn't or any of the officers or men—so, on the theory that we are all equals, you have no right to do so."

"Certainly not, sir," said Jack, "but I still do not see why that officer is so angry and his way of talking so rough."<sup>28</sup>

"I have given you the reason for that sort of behaviour, Mr. Easy."

"Oh yes—love for the navy. But how sad that the navy isn't able to do without this love!"

Captain Wilson gave a laugh and later, while talking to Mr. Smallsole, the officer of the watch, he said a word or two about his rough language. Mr. Smallsole was not pleased at this<sup>29</sup> and in his mind gave Jack a black mark.

Jack had a meal in the captain's room and

<sup>27</sup> *Hammocks.* Slight abridgments will be noticed when the translator has cut out details not readily comprehensible to readers unfamiliar with the arrangements on the warships of Nelson's day.

<sup>28</sup> The delicacies of social tone which *gentleman* brings in makes hard going for Basic, so the translator has cut this. We might try: "as if I were not as good as he" or "as

if we were not equals." But the first risks making Mr. Easy seem aggressive, the second risks over-reiteration of the main burden of the tale.

<sup>29</sup> This pleasing bit of psychology might have gone into Basic as "whose feelings were as readily wounded as he was ready to be wounding to others."

pleased to find that everyone drank wine with him, and that everybody at the captain's table appeared to be on an equality. Before the desert had been on the table five minutes, Jack became loquacious on his favourite topic; all the company stared with surprise at such an unheard-of doctrine being broached on board a man-of-war; the captain argued the point, so as to controvert, without too much offending, Jack's notions, laughing the whole time that the conversation was carried on.

After Jack had dined in the cabin, he followed his messmates Jolliffe and Gascoigne down into the midshipman's berth.

"I say, Easy," observed Gascoigne, "you are a devilish free and easy sort of fellow, to tell the captain that you considered yourself as great a man as he was."

"I beg your pardon," replied Jack, "I did not argue individually, but generally, upon the principles of the rights of man."

"Well," replied Gascoigne, "it's the first time I ever heard a middy do such a bold thing: take care your rights of man don't get you in the wrong box—there's no arguing on board <sup>80</sup> of a man-of-war. . . ."

"And yet it was with the expectation of finding that equality that I was induced to come to sea."

"On the first of April, I presume," replied Gascoigne. "But are you really serious?"

Hereupon Jack entered into a long argument, to which Jolliffe and Gascoigne listened without interruption, and Mesty with admiration—at the end of it Gascoigne laughed heartily, and Jolliffe sighed.

"From whence did you learn all this?" inquired Jolliffe.

"From my father, who is a great philosopher, and has constantly upheld these opinions."

"And did your father wish you to go to sea?"

"No, he was opposed to it," replied Jack, "but of course he could not combat my rights and free will."

was very much pleased to see that everyone took wine with him and that all at the captain's table seemed to be equals. Before the fruit had been on the table for five minutes, Jack was giving an account of his theories. Everyone was greatly surprised at hearing such ideas on a warship; the captain took the opposite side in the argument, but very kindly, laughing frequently.

After Jack had had his meal in the captain's room, he went down to the midshipmen's room after Jolliffe and Gascoigne.

"I say, Easy," said Gascoigne, "I'm surprised that you have the face to say to the captain that you are as good as he is."

"My argument was quite general," said Jack. "I was not talking about special persons."

"Well," said Gascoigne, "it's the first time in my experience that a midshipman has done such a thing; take care that your rights of man don't get you into the wrong box—there's no argument on <sup>80</sup> a warship. . . ."

"But it was with the hope of living in a free and equal society that I came to sea," said Jack.

"But are you serious?" said Gascoigne, greatly surprised. Jack got started on a long argument; at the end of it Gascoigne gave a laugh. "Where did you get all these ideas?" said Jolliffe.

"From my father, who is a man of theories and has at all times put forward these opinions."

"And was it by your father's desire that you came to sea?"

"No, he was against it," said Jack, "but naturally he was not able to make a fight against my rights."

<sup>80</sup> *Board* is Basic but not in this phrase which would

add to a learner's troubles without adding to his understanding.

"Mr. Easy, as a friend," replied Jolliffe, "I request <sup>31</sup> that you would as much as possible keep your opinions to yourself; I shall have an opportunity of talking to you on the subject, and will then explain to you my reasons."—F. Marryat, *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, New York, Century Company, 1906, pp. 60–61, 65–66.

"Mr. Easy, as a friend," said Jolliffe, "I would have you <sup>31</sup> keep these opinions as much as possible to yourself. I will give you my reasons later."—F. Marryat, *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, Cambridge, Basic English Publishing Company, 1942, pp. 37–39.

Basic is not, of course, at present proposed as a medium in which documents of the historic importance of the Atlantic Charter should be definitively formulated. It is one of a number of means by which the peoples of the world can study to find out what has been said. But in framing such declarations, in the drafting of treaties generally, the peculiar relation of Basic to full English makes it an especially useful guard against the opposed dangers of such work: of seeming to undertake more than can be done and of technical unintelligibility. As an aid in exploring possibilities of misunderstanding, if nothing more, Basic may well have a part to play in this supremely important field of composition. And there will be more reason for a Basic version when a Pacific Charter comes to be written.

*Original.* The President of the United States and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.<sup>32</sup>

First, their countries seek no aggrandizement,<sup>33</sup> territorial or other.

Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live;<sup>34</sup> and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

*Basic.* The President of the United States and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, acting for His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being now together, are of the opinion that it is right to make public certain common ideas in the political outlook of their two countries, on which are based their hopes for a better future for all nations.<sup>32</sup>

First, their countries will do nothing to make themselves stronger<sup>33</sup> by taking more land or increasing their power in any other way.

Second, they have no desire for any land to be handed over from one nation to another without the freely voiced agreement of the men and women whose interests are in question.

Third, they take the view that all nations have the right to say what form of government they will have;<sup>34</sup> and it is their desire to see their self-government and rights as independent nations given back to those from whom they have been taken away by force.

<sup>31</sup> *Would have you.* Stricter Basic does not use *would* in this volitional sense. *Please* can take its place here . . .

<sup>32</sup> *The world—all nations.* The Basic form distributes the benefit to come. The world could have a better future without all nations enjoying it.

<sup>33</sup> This Basic expansion of *aggrandizement* shows how curiously specialized this word is in its meaning. All countries at all times are necessarily doing much to "make themselves stronger" by "increasing their power in" numbers of ways. The trouble is that there is no clear line

between a country's industries or population and its war-making power. *Aggrandizement* has the suggestion "against the interests of others—by putting other countries in a worse position in comparison with themselves." "First, their countries are not designing to take away anything from other countries to make themselves greater."

<sup>34</sup> Basic is no clearer than full English about what a nation (or people) is, as to who are its voice, or how it is to say what form of government it will have.

Fourth, they will endeavour, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms<sup>35</sup> to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity.<sup>36</sup>

Fifth, they desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field, with the object of securing for all improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security.

Sixth, after the final destruction of Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and<sup>37</sup> which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want.

Seventh, such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance.

Eighth, they believe all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent<sup>38</sup> system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments.—The Atlantic Charter.

Fourth, they will do their best, while respecting their present undertakings, to make it possible for all nations, great or small, whichever side they were on in the war, to take part in the trade, equally with others,<sup>35</sup> and have the materials which are needed for the full development of their industry.<sup>36</sup>

Fifth, it is their desire to get all nations working together in complete harmony in the field of trade and industry, so that all may be given better working conditions, have greater material well-being, and be certain of the necessities of existence.

Sixth, after the complete destruction of the Nazi rule of force, it is their hope to see a peace made which will keep all nations safe from attack from outside, and<sup>37</sup> which will make certain that all the men in all the lands will be free from fear and need through all their days.

Seventh, such a peace will have to make it possible for all men to go freely everywhere across the sea.

Eighth, it is their belief that all the nations of the earth, for material reasons no less than because it is right and good, will, in the end, give up the use of force. Because war will come again if countries which are, or may be, ready to make attacks on others go on using land, sea, or air power, it is their belief that it is necessary to take away all arms from them till a wider system of keeping the general peace, more solid<sup>38</sup> in structure, comes into being. They will, further, give their help and support to all other possible steps which may make the crushing weight of arms less for peace-loving nations.—Basic version.

From high statesmanship to our next example is not so great a transition as it may seem.

A group of tenth- and eleventh-grade students from the Cambridge School, Inc., Kendal Green, Massachusetts, who had insisted upon studying Basic in their free time were recently looking for a practical application of their

<sup>35</sup> On equal terms.

<sup>36</sup> *Economic prosperity*—full development of their industry. Both are phrases which need to be considered in connection with world economic planning.

<sup>37</sup> And let all men everywhere go free from fear and need from that time on is an alternative.

<sup>38</sup> Solid has some of the sense of *permanent* without the trouble-causing *same forever* idea.

newly won ability. The Cambridge Community Federation were just then issuing a statement of general policy and current work. It was suggested that this would be a good opportunity for these youngsters to try out their Basic. If the statement were in Basic, curiosity might help to keep it in circulation. The project came at a difficult moment. The group were scattered to homes and work camps and vacation places by the time copy was available, but they picked three of themselves to act as an editorial committee and then divided up the work, co-ordinated the extremes, and met the deadline exactly. Extremely little editing was needed when the typescript came in. Here is a representative part of their statement.

*Original.* A well-balanced, effective program of social service requires careful planning. With many service organizations involved, both governmental and voluntary, it is important that their channels of service do not cross. Nor should there be gaps or omissions between the services rendered by the various organizations. Overlapping services cause waste and confusion. Gaps or omissions weaken the entire structure of the community's program. Also, close co-operation between all service organizations is essential. There is but one goal—a better community. All must work hand in hand to achieve that common objective.

To promote the close co-ordination of all services—and to establish co-operation among all organizations—the Cambridge Community Council was formed. This council—now ten years old—is the planning board for Cambridge Voluntary Services. At regular meetings it feels the pulse of the community and is constantly working for the improvement of our social service program so that Cambridge needs may be met most effectively.

The moral of the above statement applies equally to that over-all peace organization for which the world is praying.

One of the chief problems of that organization is the subject of the following extract from an article in *The Reader's Digest*.

*Original.* Nothing makes more world-wide woe than the poisonous pride of race.<sup>39</sup> It is the true taproot of the beastliness of Nazism<sup>40</sup> and Nipponism,<sup>40</sup> and it defies even democratic political institutions. In our own United States,

<sup>39</sup> Basic loses the snap of this but gains by being forced to take the ideas behind race apart.

*Basic.* It takes thought and care to make up and put into operation a well-balanced program for these organizations which do work for the common good. There are numbers of them in existence, public and private, and it is important to keep them from covering some needs two or three times and others not at all. Two organizations doing much the same work make for waste. The effect is bad. And it is worse to have holes in the over-all program so that some needs go uncovered by any organization. Keeping in touch with one another—that is the necessary thing. There is but one end—better living conditions for all. If that is to be the outcome, the way to get it is by joining hands in a common cause.

To keep all units working smoothly together, all organizations helping one another, the Cambridge Community Council was formed. This group is now ten years old. At regular meetings it makes observation of public needs and is ever on the lookout for changes which may be made in the programs of the different organizations, so that they may be better servants of Cambridge.

*Basic.* There is no greater power for undermining peace on earth than the poisoning belief that one nation, color or religion<sup>39</sup> is better than another. In it are the roots of the worst outgrowths of Nazism<sup>40</sup> and Nipponism,<sup>40</sup> and

<sup>40</sup> *Nazism* and *Nipponism* rank now, alas, as internationally known labels.

where every political windbag <sup>41</sup> talks himself into office by screaming about democracy, <sup>42</sup> we have to give first place as a troublemaker to what whites call "the Negro problem." Negroes could with equal accuracy call it "the white problem."

All CIO unions <sup>43</sup> are committed to a fight to the finish <sup>44</sup> against race discrimination in CIO jobs. Two Negroes sit on CIO's executive board. <sup>45</sup>

The CIO thoroughly understands that Negroes, as they gain in education and skill, will either be members of unions or they will be called in by employers as strike-breakers <sup>46</sup> to destroy unions. And in that fact lies the most solid reason for believing that equality of economic opportunity for Negroes will some day be a vital point in the social program <sup>47</sup> of the whole American labor movement. When that day comes the Negro's economic problem will be half solved.

The other half of the solution lies in the hands of employers. Many employers have been extremely adventurous in production methods and sales methods but extremely timid in the field of social human relations. They were not employing Negroes. Why seek trouble by taking them on? It required the war and the acute shortage of manpower to persuade such employers to put Negroes on their payrolls.

Southerners have always recognized the strange, deep psychological insight of the Negro. They often speak of "that wise old Negro." And it is upon that patient "wis-

<sup>41</sup> *Political windbag*. This might be hard for a foreign student but the content is strong and the thing itself not rare.

<sup>42</sup> *Democracy*, since the war, may be counted an international word. The translator was playing safe in avoiding it.

<sup>43</sup> *Union*. A technical term defined earlier in the translation as "an organization of the workers whose purpose is to take care of their interests," etc.

even in political systems based on the theory that all men are equal it is hard to keep it down. In these United States where every political windbag <sup>41</sup> gets into office by loud cries about equal rights, <sup>42</sup> we have to give first place as a troublemaker to what the whites say is "the Negro Question." From the Negro point of view it might equally well be named "the White Question."

All CIO unions <sup>43</sup> have undertaken to see <sup>44</sup> that the Negro is given the same rights as the white man where the work is under their control. There are two Negroes on the CIO's "executive board," <sup>45</sup> that is, the group which makes decisions for the union and puts laws into operation.

To the CIO it is quite clear that Negroes, as their education and training are increased, will be in the unions or they will be used against them to take the place of workers when there has been a walk-out. <sup>46</sup> And that fact is the most solid reason for the belief that equal rights for Negro workers will some day be a very important point in the program <sup>47</sup> of all the workers' organizations in America. When that day comes the question of the Negro's right to make a living will be half answered.

Business managers have the other half of the answer in their hands. Numbers of these have not been slow to take up new ideas in producing and pushing their goods but they have not been so forward-looking on the question of man's relation to man in society. They were not giving work to Negroes. What would be the use of looking for trouble by taking them on? There had to be a war, and the sharp need for manpower, to make this group give work to Negroes.

The Negro's deep, strange knowledge based on his feelings has never been overlooked by the whites in the South. They frequently say "that wise old Negro." And it is chiefly to the

<sup>44</sup> The translator has left out the fight without perhaps much weakening the statement.

<sup>45</sup> *Board*, though a Basic word, is not used in its sense of committee in Basic. Compare *on board*; see note 30, preceding. The definition that follows explains what an executive board is.

<sup>46</sup> A *walk-out*, given the strong context, is perhaps not too colloquial.

<sup>47</sup> *Program*. International word.

dom"<sup>48</sup> of the mass of Negroes that I rely principally for a happy ending to the present occupational tension between the races. Almost all Negroes, for instance, have been 100 per cent proof against the crafty German and Japanese radio propaganda regarding race oppression in the United States. And, indeed, why not?

There has been no large immigration of Negroes into the United States for more than 100 years. The average Negro family has been here longer than the average white family. What the Negroes want from this country is not foreign deliverance but just more Americanism.—William Hard, "Whites and Blacks Can Work Together," *The Reader's Digest*, March, 1944.

*Original.* Elizabeth and I heard the sound of hammering before we saw the house. Carpenters were busy on the roof, which shone with the raw gold color of new lumber above the foaming pink-and-white of a neglected orchard in prodigal bloom. A man and a woman were sitting on a pile of boards beneath an apple tree. When our car turned in, the woman came to meet us, tall and gaunt in tweed skirt and sweater.

Elizabeth's mother had begged us to call on the Andrews. "They'll be so lonely, moving to a new place way out in the country, though Mrs. Andrews told me they had bought the farm to get *away*." Elizabeth's mother was always rather vague. "It will be good for them to see a friendly face, although of course he's blind."<sup>49</sup> Yes, it's very sad; he's been that way since he was a child. She met him in England when she took that trip abroad 15 years ago. So fortunate for her, because nobody ever thought she would marry. She's a fine person, but so *plain*."

<sup>48</sup> *Wise and quiet sense of values.* Maybe "power of waiting on events" would add a missing part to the meaning of "patient 'wisdom.'" The quotation marks show that the author of the article did not find it easy to say just what is meant.

Negro's wise and quiet sense of values<sup>48</sup> that I am looking for a happy ending to the present trouble in industry between white and black workers. Almost all Negroes, for example, have been completely untouched by the tricks of German and Japanese radio propaganda on the color question in the United States. And why wouldn't it be so?

The number of Negroes who have come into the United States in the past 100 years is very small. The representative Negro family has been here longer than most white families. The Negroes are not turning to other countries for help but to this country for more Americanism.—Basic English version.

*Basic.* The sound of hammering came to Elizabeth and me before we saw the house. Then the roof came in view, with men at work on its new yellow wood which was bright against the mass of light red and white flowers on the bent old fruit trees in front of it. A man and woman were seated on some boards under one of the apple trees. When our automobile made the turn, the woman got to her feet and came forward, tall and thin in a wool skirt and pullover.

Elizabeth's mother had made a special request that we go to see the Andrews. "They'll be so ready for company, moving to a new place right out in the country, though Mrs. Andrews did say that they had taken the farm to get *away*." Elizabeth's mother never made what she said quite clear. "It will be good for them to see a friend's face, though he of course is blind"<sup>49</sup> [unable to see]. Yes, it's very sad. He had the use of his eyes as a little boy, but never after. Their first meeting was in England when she made that journey to Europe 15 years back. Such a happy chance for her, because nobody ever had any idea that she would get married. She has very good qualities but she has no looks."

<sup>49</sup> Recent developments in the use of Basic for the blind are worth mentioning here. Perkins Institution for the Blind in Watertown is beginning to print key Basic texts in Braille, and also to experiment with the limited vocabulary in various sorts of teaching situations.

Plain was exactly the word for Nancy Andrews. Ugly women often have a certain smartness and fascination, but she was just uninterestingly plain, with a broad, square face, pale eyes, and thin, straight hair of no especial color. She was also lacking in poise. Her fingers twisted the buttons of her sweater as she talked with us, and her smile was obviously nervous.

"Why, of course," she said when Elizabeth had introduced herself. "You're Betsy Flint's daughter. Come and meet Andy."

I can tell you of the changes that took place in her the moment she stood beside the blind man; for instance, that her voice was no longer flat when she spoke our names to him, but low and rich and full. I can tell you that she described us to him carefully—not only what we wore and the color of our eyes and hair, but the manner of people we seemed to be—with no trace of embarrassment. I can tell you that her hands were firm and steady on his arm, and that her smile was gentle and sweet. But I can't make you feel, as we felt, that she became a different woman altogether—a calm, strong woman who made us all immediately at home.—Louise Dickinson Rich, "Drama in Everyday Life," *The Reader's Digest*, March, 1944.

No looks was the right way of putting it for Nancy Andrews. Women who are far from beautiful frequently make a point of dressing well and have a certain attraction, but she was simply unpleasing to the eye, uninterestingly so, with a wide square face, light eyes, and thin, straight hair of no special color. Her behavior was uncontrolled as well. Her fingers were twisting at the buttons of her dress while she was talking with us, and her smile was uncertain.

"Why, yes," she said when Elizabeth had given her name. "You're Betsy Flint's daughter. Here is Andy."

Let me give you an idea of the changes which took place in her the minute she was by the blind man's side. Her voice, for example, was no longer flat when she said our names to him, but low and warm and full. Then, she gave him a detailed picture of us—not only how we were dressed, and the color of our eyes and hair, but what we were like in other ways and what our tastes and interests seemed to be—without being at all self-conscious. Let me give you this new picture of her—hands strong and quiet on his arm, smile kind and sweet. These details I am able to give you, but it is impossible to give you the feeling which came over us, the feeling that she became a different woman, completely—a strong self-controlled woman who put all our minds at rest, and gave us a comforting sense of well-being.—Basic version, *The Seeing Heart*.

Scenes from *Arms and the Man* lend themselves well to classroom work for foreign learners of English. It is interesting therefore to note how often Shaw's text is in or almost in Basic.

### *Original.*

RAINA (*getting angrier*): Do you realize what he has done, Captain Bluntschli? He has set this girl as a spy on us; and her reward is that he makes love to her.

SERGIUS: False! Monstrous!

RAINA: Monstrous! (*confronting him*) Do you deny that she told you about Captain Bluntschli being in my room?

### *Basic.*

RAINA (*getting angrier*): Do you see what he has done, Captain Bluntschli? He has put this girl to keep a secret watch on us; and her reward is that he makes love to her.

SERGIUS: False! A shocking suggestion!

RAINA: Shocking! (*going up to him*) Will you give your word that it was not she who said that Captain Bluntschli was in my room?

SERGIUS: No; but—

RAINA (*interrupting*): Do you deny that you were making love to her when she told you?

SERGIUS: No; but I tell you—

RAINA (*cutting him short contemptuously*): It is unnecessary to tell us anything more. That is quite enough for us. (*She turns her back on him and sweeps majestically back to the window.*)

BLUNTSCHLI (*quietly, as Sergius, in an agony of mortification, sinks on the ottoman, clutching his averted head between his fists*): I told you you were getting the worst of it, Saranoff.

SERGIUS: Tiger cat!

RAINA (*running excitedly to Bluntschli*): You hear this man calling me names, Captain Bluntschli?

BLUNTSCHLI: What else can he do, dear lady? He must defend himself somehow. Come (*very persuasively*), don't quarrel. What good does it do?

—Bernard Shaw, *Arms and the Man*.

SERGIUS: No; but—

RAINA (*stopping him*): Will you give your word that you were not making love to her when she made the statement?

SERGIUS: No; but I say—

RAINA (*cutting him short, with an angry shake of the head*): It is unnecessary to say anything more to us. This is quite enough for us. (*Turning away from him, she goes sailing<sup>50</sup> back to the window.*)

BLUNTSCHLI (*quietly, while Sergius, in deepest shame, slowly takes up his position on the long seat, turned away from them, gripping his head between his shut hands*): I said you were getting the worst of it, Saranoff.

SERGIUS: Cat!

RAINA (*running to Bluntschli, very worked up*): You see, Captain Bluntschli? This man is using bad names to me.

BLUNTSCHLI: What is more natural, dear madam? He has to do something to keep his self-respect. Come (*very kindly*), don't be angry with one another. What good does it do?

—Bernard Shaw, *Arms and the Man*  
put into Basic English by L. W.  
Lockhart, London, Evans Brothers,  
Ltd.

### Original.

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Non, non, point de vers.

MAITRE DE PHILOSOPHIE: Vous ne voulez que de la prose?<sup>51</sup>

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Non, je ne veux ni prose ni vers.

MAITRE DE PHILOSOPHIE: Il faut bien que ce soit l'un, ou l'autre.

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Pourquoi?

MAITRE DE PHILOSOPHIE: Par la raison, Monsieur, qu'il n'y a pour s'exprimer que la prose, ou les vers.

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Il n'y a que la prose ou les vers?

### Basic.

MR. JORDAN: No, no, not in verse!

PHILOSOPHER: You aren't going to send her prose?<sup>51</sup>

MR. JORDAN: No. I won't send her either prose or verse!

PHILOSOPHER: But it *has* to be one or the other!

MR. JORDAN: Why?

PHILOSOPHER: Because, sir, there is only prose or verse as a way of saying anything.

MR. JORDAN: There is only prose or verse?

<sup>50</sup> *Sailing*. A neat solution of what might look like a hard one.

<sup>51</sup> *Prose*: the learner of beginning English through Basic is in Monsieur Jourdain's position and has been using prose

all the time without being conscious that this is its (English) name. His new word needs no further definition than the whole passage supplies.

MAITRE DE PHILOSOPHIE: Non, Monsieur: tout ce qui n'est point prose est vers; et tout ce qui n'est point vers est prose.

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Et comme l'on parle qu'est-ce que c'est donc que cela?

MAITRE DE PHILOSOPHIE: De la prose.

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Quoi? Quand je dis: "Nicole, apportez-moi mes pantoufles, et me donnez mon bonnet de nuit," c'est de la prose?

MAITRE DE PHILOSOPHIE: Oui, Monsieur.

MONSIEUR JOURDAIN: Par ma foi! il y a plus de quarante ans que je dis de la prose sans que j'en susse rien! . . .

—Théâtre de Molière, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Bibliotheca Romanica, 249/250, p. 22.

*Original.* A grave white-haired seneschal came to their table, and inquired courteously whether Gerard Eliassoen was of their company. Upon Gerard's answer, he said:

"The Princess Marie would confer with you, young sir; I am to conduct you to her presence."

Instantly all faces within hearing turned sharp round, and were bent with curiosity and envy on the man that was to go to a princess.

Gerard rose to obey.

"I wager we shall not see you again," said Margaret calmly, but colouring a little.

"That will you," was the reply: then he whispered in her ear: "This is my good princess; but you are my queen." He added aloud: "Wait for me, I pray you, I will presently return."

. . . . .

"Denys!"

"Ay!"

"I fear I shall go mad if they do not come soon."

PHILOSOPHER: That's right. All is prose that is not verse. And all is verse that is not prose.

MR. JORDAN: But everyday talk, what's that?

PHILOSOPHER: Prose.

MR. JORDAN: What! And when I say, "Nicky, get my house-shoes and 'night-cap'!" is that prose?

PHILOSOPHER: Yes, sir.

MR. JORDAN: My word! For over forty years I've been talking prose, without giving it a thought! . . .

—Molière, *The Would-Be Gentleman*<sup>52</sup> put into Basic English by Charles W. Cooper and Wesley L. Lewis, Whittier College, 1941, p. 25.

*Basic.* Suddenly a voice came to them, and they saw a man, serious-faced, white-haired. He had come to see if a young man named Gerard Eliassoen was of their company. At Gerard's answer, he said:

"The Princess Marie has a desire to see you, young sir. I am to take you to her."

At that, all faces within hearing distance were turned sharply round and were bent with green and questioning eyes on the man who was to go to a princess.

Gerard got up to go with his guide.

"Ten to one we won't see you again," said Margaret quietly, but coloring a little.

"Oh yes you will," was the answer—then he said into her ear: "This is my good princess; but you are my queen." Then, loud again, he said: "Please don't go away. Be here when I come back, as I will before long."

. . . . .

"Denys!"

"Yes."

"I will go out of my mind if they do not come quickly."

<sup>52</sup> The title departs from Basic. *Would* is not volitional in strict Basic nor is *gentleman* a Basic or an international

word. A Basic gloss is needed to say that "an uneducated townsman is hoping to get a footing in high society."

"Shall I feign sleep? Shall I snore?"

"Will that—?"

"Perhaps."

"Do then, and God have mercy on us!"

Denys snored at intervals.

There was a scuffling of feet heard in the kitchen, and then all was still.

Denys snored again. Then took up his position behind the door.

But he, or they, who had drawn the lot, seemed determined to run no foolish risks. Nothing was attempted in a hurry.

When they were almost starved with cold, and waiting for the attack, the door on the stairs opened softly and closed again. Nothing more.

There was another harrowing silence.

Then a single light footstep on the stair; and nothing more.

Then a light crept under the door; and nothing more.

Presently there was a gentle scratching, not half so loud as a mouse's, and the false door-post opened by degrees and left a perpendicular space through which the light streamed in. The door, had it been bolted, would now have hung by the bare tip of the bolt, which went into the real door-post, but, as it was, it swung gently open of itself. It opened inwards, so Denys did not raise his crossbow<sup>53</sup> from the ground, but merely grasped his dagger.

The candle was held up, and shaded from behind by a man's hand.

He was inspecting the beds from the threshold, satisfied that his victims were both in bed.

The man glided into the apartment. But at the first step something in the position of the cupboard<sup>54</sup> and chair made him uneasy. He ventured no further, but put the candle on the floor and stooped to peer under the chair; but, as he stooped, an iron hand grasped his shoulder, and a dagger was driven so fiercely through his neck that the point came out at

"How if I seem to be sleeping and make a noise through my nose?"

"Will that—?"

"It might."

"Then do, and the Father above give us help."

From time to time Denys made noises as of a man in deep sleep.

There was sound of feet moving in the lower room and then all was quiet.

Denys made the noise again. Then took up his position at the back of the door. But he, or they, who had to come up, seemed to have little taste for unnecessary danger. Nothing was attempted till it was time.

When Denys and Gerard were almost unconscious with the cold, waiting for the attack, the door on the steps came quietly open and then was shut again. Nothing more.

No other sound.

Then one soft sound of a foot on the steps; and nothing more.

Then a light came under the door; and nothing more.

After a time there was a very little sound, and the false door support came open bit by bit, letting light through a long narrow space. The door, had it been pinned, would now have been kept shut only by the end of the pin resting in the true support, but as it was it came slowly open by itself. It came open into the room, so Denys took up his sharp pointed knife from the floor.

The wax light was lifted up and shaded by a man's hand. A man was looking over at the bed, certain that the two of them were in it.

The man came into the room without a sound. But he got no more than a step or two before something in the position of the cupboard<sup>54</sup> and seat made him troubled. He went no farther, but put the wax light on the floor and took a look under the seat; but as his head went down an iron hand took a grip of the top of his arm and a blade was sent so violently

<sup>53</sup> A crossbow is a very hard thing to describe clearly (without pictures) even in full English. The translator has probably been wise in omitting this point as not es-

sential to the action, which hardly brooks delay at such a point.

<sup>54</sup> Cupboard, See note on difficult Basic compounds, p. 17.

his gullet. There was a terrible hiccup<sup>55</sup> but no cry; and half a dozen silent strokes followed in swift succession, each a death-blow, and the assassin was laid noiselessly on the floor.—Charles Reade, *The Cloister and the Hearth*, Modern Library, 1937.

*Original.* "One, two, tree, four, fibe—I done pass fibe big limb, massa,<sup>56</sup> 'pon dis side."

"Then go one limb higher."

In a few minutes the voice was heard again, announcing that the seventh limb was attained.

"Now, Jup," cried Legrand, evidently much excited, "I want you to work your way out upon that limb as far as you can. If you see anything strange let me know."

By this time what little doubt I might have entertained of my poor friend's insanity<sup>57</sup> was put finally at rest. I had no alternative but to conclude him stricken with lunacy, and I became seriously anxious about getting him home. While I was pondering upon what was best to be done, Jupiter's voice was again heard.

"Mos<sup>58</sup> feered for to ventur pon dis limb berry far—'tis dead limb putty much all de way."

"Did you say it was a dead limb, Jupiter?" cried Legrand in a quavering voice.

"Yes, massa, him dead as de door-nail—done up for sartin—done departed dis here life."

"What in the name of heaven shall I do?" asked Legrand, seemingly in the greatest distress.

"Do?" said I, glad of an opportunity to interpose a word, "why come home and go to bed. Come now!—that's a fine fellow. It's getting late, and, besides, you remember your promise."—Edgar Allan Poe, *The Gold Bug and Other Stories*, World Syndicate Publishing Company, pp. 120–121.

*Original.* But, however scantily the Baron von Landshort might be provided with children, his household was by no means a small one; for Providence had enriched him with

<sup>55</sup> *Hiccup* is an "onomatopoeic" word, indicating here the sort of sound made, not necessarily having anything to do with the man's diaphragm.

<sup>56</sup> *Master* is a title recognizable here through its capitalization as a variant of Mister.

through his neck that the point came out at his throat. There was a shocking hiccup<sup>55</sup> but no cry; and six more quick blows made certain of him. Down he went on the floor without a sound.—Basic English radio version.

*Basic.* "One, two, three, four, five—I've gone past five thick branches, Master<sup>56</sup> Will, this side."

"Then go one branch higher."

In a short time the voice came again, saying that he had got to the seventh branch.

"Now, Jupiter," said Legrand, worked up by this time, "you're to get out on that branch slowly, as far as possible. If you see anything strange, say so."

By this time, I no longer had the smallest doubt that my poor friend was off his head.<sup>57</sup> It was quite clear that he was completely unbalanced, and I became seriously troubled about getting him back to his house. While I was turning over in my mind what to do, Jupiter's voice came to our ears again.

"'Tisn't<sup>58</sup> safe to go very far out on this branch—it's dead almost all the way."

"Did you say it was a dead branch, Jupiter?" said Legrand in a shaking voice.

"Yes, Master Will, he's dead as a door-nail. That's certain—it's dead and gone."

"What ever am I going to do now?" said Legrand, greatly troubled.

"Do?" I said, happy to be able to get a word in, "why, come back and go to bed. Come on, my dear boy. It's getting late, and you gave me your word."—Edgar Allan Poe, *The Gold Insect* in Basic English, *Psyche Miniatures*, pp. 38–39.

*Basic.* But though the baron had only one daughter, his family was not a small one, because chance had given him a great number of poor relations. Their natural impulses were

<sup>57</sup> *Out of his mind* might be clearer to beginners in English than *off his head*.

<sup>58</sup> The nearest the Basic comes to suggesting the flavor of Jupiter's way of talking. The aim of the Basic version is first of all to be *clear* for a beginner in the language.

an abundance of poor relations. They, one and all, possessed the affectionate disposition common to humble relatives; were wonderfully attached to the baron, and took every possible occasion to come in swarms and enliven the castle. All family festivals were commemorated by these good people at the baron's expense; and when they were filled with good cheer, they would declare that there was nothing on earth so delightful as these family meetings, these jubilees of the heart.

"I am sorry," said the stranger, "to break in upon you thus unseasonably—"

Here the baron interrupted him with a world of compliments and greetings; for, to tell the truth, he prided himself upon his courtesy and eloquence. The stranger attempted, once or twice, to stem the torrent of words, but in vain, so he bowed his head and suffered it to flow on. By the time the baron had come to a pause, they had reached the inner court of the castle; and the stranger was again about to speak, when he was once more interrupted by the appearance of the female part of the family, leading forth the shrinking and blushing bride. He gazed on her for a moment as one entranced; it seemed as if his whole soul beamed forth in the gaze, and rested upon that lovely form. One of the maiden aunts whispered something in her ear; she made an effort to speak; her moist blue eye was timidly raised; gave a shy glance of inquiry on the stranger; and was cast down again to the ground. The words died away; but there was a sweet smile playing about her lips, and a soft dimpling of the cheek that showed her glance had not been unsatisfactory. It was impossible for a girl of the fond age of eighteen, highly predisposed for love and matrimony, not to be pleased with so gallant a cavalier.—*The Spectre Bridegroom*, from Works of Washington Irving, Stratford Edition, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1882, pp. 218, 226.

*Original.* There had been few changes in the village; for it was not one of those thriving places where a year's prosperity makes more than the havoc of a century's decay; but

loving, as is common with poor relations, and having a great love for the baron, they took every possible chance to come in great numbers, and to make the house bright and happy. These good persons kept all the birthdays and other family events, with the help of the baron's money; and when they were full of good food, they would say that nothing on earth gave them so much pleasure as these family meetings, when all their happy hearts were united.

"I am pained," said the young man, "to have come among you at such a time—" Here the baron put an end to his words by saying a number of kind things, and truly, he had at all times a very high opinion of himself for his kind behaviour and his moving language. The newcomer made an attempt, once or twice, to say something, but it was no use; so with bent head, he let the baron go on. By the time the baron had done his talking, they had come to the inside of the house; and again the newcomer was going to say something, when he was stopped by seeing the women of the family coming in with the young girl. There was a bright colour in her face, and she was slow to come forward. He gave her a long look, as if he were seeing her in his sleep; it seemed as if all his heart went out to her while his eyes were resting upon that beautiful form. One of her father's sisters said something softly in her ears. She made an attempt to get some words out, and lifting her bright blue eyes, she took a quick, self-conscious look at him before turning them down again to the floor. The words came to an end, there was a sweet smile upon her lips, which made it clear that she was pleased with what she had seen. It was natural for a young girl of eighteen, ready for love and desiring to get married, to be pleased with a person so strong and so good-looking.—"The Shade of the Dead Lover," in Hawthorne, Irving, and Poe, *The Three Signs*, London, Kegan Paul, 1935, pp. 28, 38.

*Basic.* Little was changed in the town: it was not one of those places where a year's good business makes more mark than a hundred years of slow wasting away; but a quiet <sup>89</sup> little

like a grey hair in a young man's head, an antiquated<sup>59</sup> little town, full of old maids and aged elms and moss-grown dwellings. Few seemed to be the changes here. . . . Yet, summing up all the mischief that ten years had wrought, it seemed scarcely more than if Ralph Cranfield had gone forth that very morning, and dreamed a day-dream till the twilight, and then turned back again. But his heart grew cold, because the village did not remember him as he remembered the village.

"Here is the change!" sighed he, striking his hand upon his heart. "Who is this man of thought and care, weary with world-wandering, and heavy with disappointed hopes? The youth returns not, who went forth so joyously!"

And now Ralph Cranfield was at his mother's gate (in front of the small house where the old lady, with slender but sufficient means, had kept herself comfortable during her son's long absence). Admitting himself within the enclosure, he leaned against a great old tree, trifling with his own impatience, as people often do in those intervals when years are summed into a moment. He took a minute survey of the dwelling, its windows, brightened with the sky-gleam, its doorway, with the half of a millstone for a step, and the faintly traced path waving thence to the gate. He made friends again with his childhood friends, the old tree against which he leaned; and glancing his eye adown its trunk, beheld something that excited a melancholy smile. It was a half-obliterated inscription—the Latin word *effode*—which he remembered to have carved in the bark of the tree, with a whole day's toil, when he had first begun to muse about his exalted destiny. It might be accounted a rather singular coincidence, that the bark, just above that inscription, had put forth an excrescence, shaped not unlike a hand, with the forefinger pointing obliquely at the word of fate. Such, at least, was its appearance in the dusky light.—"The Threefold Destiny," from *Twice Told Tales*, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Chicago, Scott, Foresman and Company, 1904, pp. 534-535.

<sup>59</sup> *Quiet* translates only part of what is conveyed in *antiquated*. This may partly explain why, though "like a grey

town, full of old unmarried women, and old twisted trees, and old roofs touched with green. Putting together all the changes ten years had made, it seemed little more than if Ralph Cranfield had gone away that same morning, had been sleeping till night-fall, and was now turning back again. But his heart was cold; because the town seemed to have kept no memory of him as he had of the town.

"The change is *here!*" he said sadly, his hand on his heart. "Who is this man of thought and care, tired with journeying over the earth, and weighted with broken hopes? The young man comes not back again who went away so happily!"

And now Ralph Cranfield was at his mother's door. Letting himself into the garden, he came to a stop under a great tree, playing with his desire to go into the house as one does at those times when the years seem minutes. He took a long look at the house, its windows bright with the light of the sky, its doorway and the stone step, and the uncertain line of the footway curving from the door to the street. The tree against which he was resting was an old friend, and looking at it, his eye was taken by something which made a sad smile come to his lips. It was a half rubbed-out Latin word—*effode*—the cutting of which had been a full day's work when as a boy he was starting to give thought to his great future. It might be looked on as a somewhat strange fact that, over the word, the tree had put out a growth formed not unlike a hand with the first finger pointing down. Or so at least it seemed in the half light.—"The Three Signs," in Hawthorne, Irving, and Poe, *The Three Signs*, London, Kegan Paul, 1935, pp. 13-14.

hair in a young man's head" is good Basic, the translator does not use the comparison.

*Original.* The Committee of Ministers on Basic English, after hearing a considerable volume of evidence, have submitted a Report which has been approved in principle by His Majesty's Government. The Committee, in their report, distinguish between the use of a system such as Basic English as an auxiliary international language, and as a method for the teaching of ordinary English. In this latter field, several very promising methods, other than Basic, have been developed in recent years, which make use of progressively increasing vocabularies based on analysis of the words most frequently used in conversational and literary English. In foreign countries, the method used in the teaching of English will naturally be a matter for the decision of the Departments of Education of those countries, and, where teaching is conducted in British Institutes, it will be a matter for the free decision of those who direct the teaching of English whether they employ any of these methods or the Basic method. There is no reason why His Majesty's Government should support one method rather than another. So far, however, as concerns the use of Basic English as an auxiliary international language, His Majesty's Government are impressed with the great advantages which would ensue from its development not in substitution for established literary languages, but as a supplement thereto. The usefulness of such an auxiliary language will, of course, be greatly increased by its progressive diffusion.

His Majesty's Government have, therefore, decided on the following steps to develop Basic English as an auxiliary international and administrative language:—

(1) The British Council will include among its activities the teaching of Basic English, so far as may be practicable, in any area where there may be a demand for instruction in Basic for its specific purpose as an auxiliary medium of international communication. This will be in addition to, and not in substitution for, the Council's more general activities in promoting the teaching of English for its own sake.

*Basic.* The Committee of Ministers on Basic English, after hearing the views of a great number of experts, have made a statement on the question which has been given general approval by His Majesty's Government. It is pointed out by the Committee in their statement that the use of a system such as Basic English as an international second language is something quite separate from its use for the teaching of normal English. In this second field, two or three other systems which give signs of working very well have been produced in the last five or ten years. These make use of selections of words, increasing by stages, which are based on observation of the words most frequently used in talking and writing English. In other countries, the system used in the teaching of English will naturally be a question for the decision of the Education Offices in those countries, and where teaching is given in British Institutes, those in control of the teaching of English will be free to make use of any of these systems or of the Basic system. There is no reason for His Majesty's Government to give more support to one system than to another.

So far, however, as Basic English is offered as an international second language, His Majesty's Government take the view that much good would come from its development not in place of languages rooted in history and used by great writers, but as an addition to them. The value of such a second language will naturally be increased if it is more and more widely used.

For this reason His Majesty's Government have come to the decision to take these steps for the development of Basic English as a language for international use and for purposes of government:—

(1) The British Council, in addition to its other work, will undertake the teaching of Basic English, so far as may be possible, in any place where there may be a desire for a knowledge of Basic for its special purpose as a second language for international use. This will be in addition to, and not in place of, the Council's more general work of helping forward the teaching of English as an end in itself.

(2) Diplomatic and commercial representatives in foreign countries will be asked to do all they can to encourage the spread of Basic English as an auxiliary language.

(3) It is also intended to arrange for the translation into Basic English of a wider range than is at present available of literature—scientific, technical and general—both from ordinary English and from foreign languages and also to increase the supply of manuals of instruction in Basic English.

(4) Some Colonial Governments will be invited to experiment by the issue in Basic English of handbooks for colonial peoples on agriculture, hygiene, etc., and by the use of this simplified language as the medium for some administrative instructions issued by the Government.

(5) The British Broadcasting Corporation has been asked to consider a recommendation to include the use and teaching of Basic English in appropriate overseas programmes. The Corporation has already expressed its willingness to make experiments on these lines within the limits imposed by special wartime responsibilities and conditions. It is recognised that such developments as may be practicable must proceed in parallel with the steps to be taken by other agencies.

It will be seen that several Departments are concerned in these measures. It has been decided, however, that primary responsibility for questions affecting Basic English, and for giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers, should rest with the Foreign Office, through the British Council. The British Council will, of course, keep in close contact with the Foreign Office and with the other Departments concerned, and an inter-Departmental committee has been established for this purpose, under a chairman who will be nominated by the British Council.—Prime Minister's Statement on Basic English, March 9, 1944.

(2) Foreign Office and trade representatives in other countries will be requested to do everything possible to get Basic English more widely used as a second language.

(3) In addition, our purpose is to have a wider range of books on science, on special arts and processes, and on general questions put into Basic English from normal English and from other languages, at the same time increasing the number of handbooks for teaching Basic English.

(4) The suggestion will be made to the Governments of some of our Colonies that they take part in the testing of Basic by getting out handbooks in Basic English on farming, on how to keep healthy, and so on for their Colonies, and by using this simple language for some of their orders in connection with government business.

(5) The British Broadcasting Corporation has been requested to give its attention to a suggestion for the teaching and use of Basic English in overseas programmes where this might be of value. The Corporation has said that it is ready to put the system to the test on these lines inside the limits made necessary by wartime undertakings and conditions. It is clear that such developments as may be possible will have to go forward parallel with the steps taken by other bodies.

It will be seen that more than one Government Office will have a part in the programme outlined. The decision has been made, however, that the Foreign Office, through the British Council, will be chiefly responsible for questions to do with Basic English and for giving effect to the suggestions of the Committee of Ministers. The British Council will naturally keep in touch all the time with the Foreign Office and with the other Government Offices which are interested. For this purpose, a Committee made up of representatives of these Offices has been formed and its head will be a person named by the British Council.—Prime Minister's Statement on Basic English, March 9, 1944.

## CHAPTER SIX

# Interpretation

WE HAVE all suffered from the kind of confusion illustrated by the exclamation, "What a (w)hole Harvard is!" The speaker had one idea in his mind and his hearer another. Most of us, too, have our stories about children's misunderstandings of prayers: "Lead us not into Thames Station," and so on. (Shades of the deep Shelter! What division will there be between those who had to go through all that and those who did not?) These mishearings come at the foot of a ladder that reaches up as high as Jacob's. On the lower rungs of it we are most of us fairly safe, though children are not. A little girl meeting for the first time

*There is a green hill far away  
Without a city wall*

was deeply (and rightly) puzzled as to why a green hill should have a wall at all. *Without* as "outside" had not yet come within her ken. There might be these notable differences, however, between our examples. In the first, there could be solid grounds of prejudice to explain the mistaking of *whole* for *hole*. In the second, mere unfamiliarity with the word *temptation* might be enough. But in the third, the word *without* was familiar enough in one of its senses. In fact it was this very familiarity which prevented the possibility of another sense from coming up. Had the word been quite new, had it been *ayont*, say, there would have been no trouble. Context would have made the reader take it in her stride. It was because the word was already reserved and booked for another sense that the relevant sense was turned away.

A similar case higher up the ladder occurred when Chateaubriand translated Milton's *fast* in *Paradise Lost* (I: 11-12)

*Siloa's brook that flow'd  
Fast by the oracle of God*

by *rapidement*. Milton meant "beside, close to, hard by" though "hard" would probably have confirmed Chateaubriand in his impression. Translation from other languages constantly brings up this sort of mistake. Teachers and students generally understand them very well and know how to be on the lookout for them. Indeed, mistakes of this sort commonly announce themselves as resoundingly as fog signals—to others, who know the language better. In general they do no great damage to human understanding—unless they get into translations of peace treaties or similar places. And if that happens we will usually be right in suspecting that more than mere ignorance was responsible for the mistake. We shall probably find that it was as much a twist as a slip.

Mistakes due to mere ignorance, to insufficiently wide acquaintance with a language, to unfamiliar words, and so forth, come within the routine of learning. The remedy is as simple as the fault—a careful look at the right part of the right article in Webster's will supply the missing bit or clean up the confusion. We may note in passing that this *acquaintanceship* with words is a surface matter. It does not go deeper than the sort of acquaintance we may have with thousands of people: We know their names, can recognize their faces or voices, we may know broadly what they do and who they are—but we do not *really know* them. We have no need to. Acquaintanceship is enough.

The really serious misunderstandings (from the lost point to the quarrel) concern those other words we all think we do really know—the familiar, friendly, incessantly useful key

words which take a part in all our doings and in every third sentence.<sup>1</sup> In general the more useful a word is the more dangerous it can be. This is important—and particularly for Basic, since so many Basic words are certainly among the most useful. What we have just said may seem to hand enemies of Basic a magnificent weapon, but Basic supplies its own remedy here—through giving so much *intensive experience* with these words. The foreign learner is given this in learning his Basic, the English speaker through learning to keep within it. Both are better placed than a similar student without the experience to deal “justly, skillfully and magnanimously” with these handiest if trickiest of words.

No reader who has worked through our Chapter V, the one previous, is very likely to think at this point that we are scaremongering, or exaggerating these losses and dangers. For his eye will not be on problems like the use of *lay* and *lie*, *infer* and *imply*, *ingenuous* and *ingenious*, *awake* and *waken* or similar malapropistic and stylistic hazards. As we have remarked above, these are not the troublemakers. A certain sort of language study—well understood by every good language teacher—can deal with them. Dictionary exercises can handle all confusions between different words or between those senses of one word which a dictionary can list. The trouble is more widespread, since the mistakes that matter most are mistakes as to *the jobs a word may be doing at a place in a passage*. The senses of a word (as we are using “sense” here) are limited—much as a man’s official positions are limited. (Even Poo Bah’s ministerial appointments were limited.) But his jobs may be endless, covering everything he can successfully turn his hand to. Senses are relatively settled things. Jobs can be indefinitely various and shifting. It is useful, of course, to know that Poo Bah is at once First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Chief Justice, Commander in Chief, Lord High Admiral, Master of the Buckhounds,

Groom of the Back Stairs, Archbishop of Tipper, Lord Mayor both Acting and Elect, Lord Chamberlain, Attorney-General, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Privy Purse, Private Secretary, Leader of the Opposition, Paymaster General, Lord High Auditor, and First Commissioner of Police, and you may suffer if you forget it. But over and above this you need to be able to see whether it is a pencil or his knife which he is sharpening and he may be doing either in any or none of his official capacities. So, too, a word’s job—what it is doing at a place in a passage—is not settled simply by its dictionary sense or senses; it is settled by what the occasion and the rest of the passage hands it to do then and there. In brief, its job is what the situation requires of it.

Now the jobs that words do are the really neglected part of most studies of reading and writing. To study their jobs we have, of course to know the senses of the words, but too often our studies stop right there. That is not enough. For real understanding we must go further and look closer, and this is where Basic can be a help—chiefly through forcing us, as no less limited medium will, to concern ourselves with the context.<sup>2</sup> It is the context always that assigns a word’s job and it is only through the context that we can discover what it is doing.

A current example will make this distinction between the *senses* and the *jobs* of words clear. Take the word *fear*. No dictionary will tell us what sort of fear is in question when we meet the word. Fear of what, and how or why felt? A good dictionary can separate for us:

1. A painful sort of emotion, or an instance of it.
2. A state or habit of fearing.
3. Awe or reverence, e.g. for the Supreme Being.
4. That which causes fear or toward which fear is felt.

<sup>1</sup> For a list of 100 such key words, and a discussion of our means of mastering them, see *How To Read a Page* by I. A. Richards (Norton, 1942), pp. 22, 108, and Chapter VII, “The Choice of the Key Words.”

<sup>2</sup> A set of first exercises of this sort for school use is *Words at Work* by Christine Gibson, which may be obtained from the Harvard Commission on English Language Studies, 13 Kirkland Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

It can and does indicate something of the possible range of the word's jobs by listing other words, *anxiety, cowardice, timidity* . . . which may in various contexts take over its work. But when we have consulted the dictionary and absorbed all it says, we still have, in connection say with "freedom from fear," to consider for ourselves what job *fear* has here—in view of the relevant context of situation—immense though this job is and reaching, of course, far beyond the accompanying words. We have to decide (a) what sorts of fears, (b) felt in what measure, (c) about what, (d) by whom, (e) under what conditions, (f) when, (g) where, and (h) why—at least.

This looks absurdly overcomplicated—but in fact most people do all this in a flash as easily and unconsciously as they turn their eyes in the direction of a sound—which would look a hopelessly complicated business, too, if we were to start writing out the *how* of it. Most people know pretty well what this ideal means. And they know very well that Mr. Roosevelt in formulating the Four Freedoms was not recommending, under the heading of "Freedom from Fear," any blind optimism or ostrichism, any form of anodyne or alcohol, any neglect of preparations for defense or lack of realism in foreign affairs. They know, too, that he was not inhibiting either the pursuit of wisdom (fear of the Lord is its beginning; *Proverbs* 9:10) or true courage (the knowledge of what is truly to be feared, as Plato defined it; *Republic* 430).

*Fear* is a big word. As things have been, are, and probably will be, it is one of the most useful of words. And though states of anxiety and dread need to have their inner and outer causes seen to, heaven defend us from becoming less apt in our necessary fears! The main thing is to have the right fears—which may imply being freed from obsessive fears and distracting physical threats. But to help us much in the choice and control of our fears is hardly yet within the sphere of government action.

Another word of the hour is *security*. And this again is a watchword which itself needs watching. It has a sinister record of very frequently meaning "overconfident of safety":

Then the five men came to Laish and saw the people that were therein how they dwelt in security after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure . . . and they were far from the Zidonians and had no dealings with any man. . . . And they said, "Arise, let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and behold it is very good, and are ye still? . . . Ye shall come unto a people secure, and the land is large . . . a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth." And they came unto Laish, unto a people quiet and secure, and smote them with the edge of the sword; and they burnt the city with fire. And there was no deliverer because it was far from Zidon, and they had no dealings with any man. (*Judges* 18:7-28)

Whatever the field, military, political, social, economic, it is well to remember that *security* can be the bit of meat the burglar brings for the dog. And it can be the burglar alarm, too. These are among its jobs.

*It fits us then to be as provident*

*As fear may teach us out of late examples.*

(*Henry V*, II, 4)

To turn to a possibly more cheerful subject, consider the word *love*. Most people have in fact considered it—have strained eyes and ears to see and hear at some crucial moment what its job then and there really was. Few words have a wider range of jobs. With few is it more important to distinguish them from one another. And again they turn up on every rung of the ladder, and there is no one who at some height does not need help in seeing to what parting of airy ways he has come. The poets are, of course, the masters here.

That Basic may be any help in the reading of poetry is a claim that has seemed shocking to some. Our readers by this time will have seen how it could aid understanding. Later in this chapter we will be experimenting with Basic explorations of a poem whose springs are mainly contrasts and dramatic tensions between some of the different jobs of the word *love*. But first let us try out the analytic powers of Basic with some prose passages, including three whose theme is the peculiar complexity of the poet's work with language.

The exercises in interpretation that follow only turn attention more fully and consciously on an aspect of work with Basic which has been present all through. If you have lingered over any of the pages in Chapter V, questioning whether the original does not have niceties of meaning and reaches of implication which the Basic misses, if you have tried your hand at formulating some of the missing meaning—either in Basic or other words—you will have noticed how provocative as well as provoking the shorthandedness of Basic is. It is provoking—it stirs irritation and impatience—but it is provocative, too. It makes one see a great deal more in and about the original than cursory reading usually finds, and very much more than a paraphrase in unlimited English would, as a rule, force one to note.

Take, for example, such a seemingly simple remark as Benjamin Franklin's "Whether real or imaginary, pain is pain and pleasure is pleasure." Basic offers, "Even when it has existence only in our mind, pain is . . ." etc. By separating a part only, we feel, of his meaning, we are made the more conscious of the rest. Our Basic does the separating with the word *when*, which fixes attention on the contrast between actual pain and pain that is dreamed of only. Franklin had that contrast first in view, but at the same time his words seem to glance tolerantly if a little scornfully at the doctrine sometimes heard that pleasure and pain are alike illusory. His words glance at this, though Franklin himself may not have been thinking of it. "Illusory or not, still—what difference does that make" is the implication. Basic could say, "Even *though* it has existence only in our mind" for "even when" and fix the side glance. But then, by that, it would miss what was certainly more important to Franklin here, the waking-dreaming contrast. A Basic version at this point, as so often, has to settle for one or other of a variety of interpretations, which in the fuller language are all possibly there interacting together. Basic gives us a still photograph of the meaning; the full language a moving picture. The stills are invaluable in studying the motion.

In pointing to these things our risk is that

we get in the light, or stir a wordy dust that gets in the eyes. It is easy to labor the analysis of meanings, when their play itself is as light as moonbeams in the mind. What Basic can do is to make us realize *concretely*, as no abstract remarks can, how much more happens endlessly in our interpretation than we normally notice. In all this it is to be noted that what may seem bewildering to a solitary student sorts itself out wonderfully in a group study. To a dozen bright youngsters coming at them from different angles the passages we are about to analyze offer no terrors at all.

Perhaps, as a description of how the mind assigns meanings to the words it reads, we may be allowed to quote from an earlier account of this tricky process:

There is a very well-known story about an old woman who told her pastor that she "found great support in that blessed word *Mesopotamia*." No light has ever been thrown upon what she meant by the blessed word. . . . I propose now to call this use of a word, merely to create a gap-to-be-filled, the *Mesopotamian use*. It will be noticed though that the gap-to-be-filled has still a distinctive character. It is a reservation, as it might be, in a tourist not a first-class coach. . . .

This technicality is a device for drawing attention to the process by which, as we read on, the meanings we are already trying out, in some degree, for the words, hang in suspense, alternate, merge in, lapse—in a score of ways respond to (as they reciprocally prepare) the following meanings. Few words keep to a Mesopotamian use for more than a very brief moment, and we may have to make an effort to get back to it, when we need to. Some passenger, more or less definite . . . almost at once occupies the berth; and we cannot too much realize how complex these dramas between rival tenants, all of whom hold tickets they believe to be valid, sometimes are. The conductor goes by what the other passengers think, and they change their minds. As for the engine driver, well, the train only travels so far as the passengers agree about something! Thus two very different things may be called "the argument." One is this drama, the process of interpretation in action. The other is a resultant of it—what finally we take to be what the statements say, when we have settled, if we ever do, what that is—which then gives a definite meaning to each key-word. A key-word is

one which thenceforward (unless the writer shifts it or the reader muddles) carries, packed up as part of its meaning, something that has been said with its aid in the passage.

In some writing, noncontroversial technology, for example, only the outcome matters. In most interesting discussions, certainly in all discussions about language, the other sort of argument, the drama over the berths, is the all-important thing. With most of them we never settle finally just what has been said. When we think we have done so, a rereading next month (if we have been mentally active in the interval) should teach us better! Here is one of the ways to stupid misapprehensions of the value of such discussions. "Didn't settle anything! Led to no conclusion!" is a frequent complaint. Sometimes it is reasonable, but more often perhaps it is imperceptive. To realize that

a question has arisen and what it is may be as positive a result as to answer another question. Answers, after all, breed questions, or should . . . "What is concluded," asked Benjamin Paul Blood, "that we should conclude anything about it?"<sup>8</sup>

Basic translation gives us a convenient way of studying these dramas among meanings when we use it upon close-packed writing in an endeavor to get as full and deep understanding as we may. In such work, of course, since the foreign beginner in English—for whom the rules of strict Basic were designed—is not in view, we are free to take liberties with Basic and try experiments which consideration for him would lead us to renounce.

We may begin with a paragraph that takes up again the problem of security. Attempt to choose between alternatives offered from time to time in the Basic interpretation, which grew out of a number of versions separately made from the original, and you will find yourself thinking closely on relevant points:

*Original.* Modern science has imposed on humanity the necessity for wandering. Its progressive thought and its progressive technology make the transition through time, from generation to generation, a true migration into uncharted seas of adventure. The very benefit of wandering is that it is dangerous and needs skill to avert evils. We must expect, therefore, that the future will disclose dangers. It is the business of the future to be dangerous; and it is among the merits of science that it equips the future for its duties. The prosperous middle classes, who ruled the nineteenth century, placed an excessive value upon placidity of existence. They refused to face the necessities for social reform imposed by the new industrial system, and they are now refusing to face the necessities for intellectual reform imposed by the new knowledge. The middle-class pessimism over the future of the world comes from a confusion between civilisation and security. In the immediate future there will be less security than in the immediate past, less stability.

<sup>8</sup> I. A. Richards, *Interpretation in Teaching*, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1938, pp. 248-249.

*Basic.* Science today has made it necessary

- (a) to go on and on from one thing to another
- (b) to give up the clear-cut road for byways still unclear
- (c) to go out into the new.

Its forward-looking thought and forward-moving processes make the changeover through time, from father to son and son's son, a true mass move

- (a) without guides into new and strange experience
- (b) over unmapped seas where anything is possible.

The value, in fact, of the journey is in the development of our power to overcome its dangers.

- (a) For this reason we have to be ready for dangers in the future.
- (b) So dangers in what is to come are to be looked for.
- (c) It is more than probable that the future will take us into new dangers.

It must be admitted that there is a degree of instability which is inconsistent with civilisation. But, on the whole, the great ages have been unstable ages.—Alfred North Whitehead, in *Science and the Modern World*, New York, 1926, pp. 298–299.

It is the business of the future to have its dangers; and it is part of the value of science that it gets the future ready to do what it has to do.

The well-off middle group in society who were in power in the 1800's put overmuch value on an untroubled existence.

- (a) They were against facing the
- (b) They were very unready to see any  
need for changes in social conditions coming from the new system in industry and they are now
- (a) turning away from
- (b) shutting their eyes to  
the need for new ways of thought put upon us by the new knowledge. This group's
- (a) dark view of
- (b) downhearted outlook over  
the future comes from
- (a) mixing up ideas about making society better with ideas about making things safer for themselves
- (b) taking well-ordered living to be the same thing as safe living.
- (a) Our ways of living tomorrow will be less safe and certain than they were yesterday.
- (b) In these coming years things will be less safe and unchanging than in the years we have seen go by.
- (a) It has to be noted that highly ordered ways of living are not possible without something solid underfoot.
- (b) An overgreat range and scale of possible changes may put an end to well-ordered ways of living.

But, as a rule, great times have been times of violent change.

It will be observed in this work, as in most Basic translation, that we have to avoid numbers of phrases that would be useful if they were not already pre-empted. Thus in the last sentence "quick change" might be better than "violent change" if "quick change artists" had never been so named.

Emerson will furnish one reply to Whitehead. The task in rendering him into Basic is far less in capturing his thought than in retaining something of his aphoristic form and balanced pace, as anyone supplying a version of his own before reading the interpretation here given will discover. The grace, the spring, the dewdrop condensation go—which does *not* mean that the translator striving to keep what he can of them becomes *less* conscious of their value.

*Original.* The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His notebooks impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance-office increases the number of accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not incumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigour of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays, First and Second Series*, World's Classics, p. 60.

*Basic.* The man of today has made himself a carriage, but is no longer able to make use of his legs. He has supports of wood for his walking but is without the support of his muscles. He has a beautiful Geneva watch but is no longer able to get the time from the sun. For help in his sailing he has a guide to the motions of sun, moon and stars, by which, these facts being put down in a book, the man in the street is become a stranger to all the stars in the sky. He does not see when the sun is at its farthest point north or south, or at the middle point between; all the circle of the bright year goes by unmarked in his mind. His notebooks make his memory the less certain; his libraries are a weight on his mind; with insurance offices, damage and destruction are on the increase; and it may be a question if our machines do not get in our way, if one effect of more polish has not been a loss of force, and one effect of railing Christianity up in churches and forms has not been less power in natural right-doing. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in our "Christian society" where is the Christian?

Another reply, or rather a view mediating between Whitehead's reckless and youthful spirit (800,000 people were injured and 23,400 killed by the motorcar in the United States last year) and Emerson's reactionary nostalgia, may be found in T. S. Eliot. Again the reader will find his thought about the passage quickening and his appraisal of the Basic restatement becoming more judicial if he attempts a Basic rendering of his own.

*Original.* Yet if the only form of tradition, of handing down, consisted in following the ways of the immediate generation before us in a blind or timid adherence to its successes, "tradition" should positively be discouraged. We have seen many such simple currents soon lost in the sand; and novelty is better than repetition. Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you

*Basic.* But if the only sort of handing down is by keeping to the ways of our fathers (walking in father's footprints and doing as mother did), doing with shut eyes what came out right for them, fearing that any change will be for the worse,

(a) then let us have as little of this as possible

(b) then no wise man will be for this.

want it you must obtain it by great labour. It involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his ~~twenty-fifth~~ year; and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional. And it is at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity.—T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays, 1917-1932*, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1932, p. 4.

We have seen the ideas of the day come to nothing time after time, like rivers in the sand. To do something new is better than to do the same things again. Let us keep the word "tradition" for something much more important which takes in much more than this. Tradition is not something you come into, as you may come into your father's money and lands; you have to get it for yourself by much hard work. The sense of history is part of it; without this we may say, it is almost impossible for anyone to go on being a "poet" (a maker) after his twenty-fifth year; and to have a sense of history, a man has to see the past, not only as past but as still living now; this sense of history makes him conscious through his very bones of what the men of his times are like, and makes him do his work moreover with a feeling that all the great writing of Europe from Homer to today, and that of his countrymen as part of this, is one thing with one present existence and present order. This sense of history which is a sense of what is not in time as well as of what is in time, and of these two together, is what the word "tradition" is talking about. And it is this which makes a writer most sharply conscious of his place in time, of his place in the present.

So many people have seen dangers (and most varied dangers) in Basic that it is tempting to apply parts of this last discussion to our present purpose. But it will be wiser to leave the reader to make his own applications. More illustrations of this use of the instrument are what he wants. Let us go on with its help to consider the poet more closely, taking Coleridge first for our guide.

"The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed control, *laxis effertur habenis*, reveals itself in the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness with difference; of the general with the concrete; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still sub-

ordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry."—S. T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. II, Ch. 14, p. 12, London, Shorecross.

*Original.* The poet, described in ideal perfection,

brings the whole soul of man into activity,

with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity.

He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity,

that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each,

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to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination.

This power, first put in action by the will and understanding,

and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed control . . .

reveals itself in

the balance or reconciliation of opposite or discordant qualities:

of sameness with difference;

of the general with the concrete;

the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects;

*Basic.* The *poet*, if we may say what the best the wisest of *poets* does and though, in fact, no writer of verse may ever come up to such a level,

(a) puts every power of man's mind to work,  
(b) makes all the parts of a man's mind awake and conscious,

(c) makes a man become all that at his best he is able to be,

with every one of its powers taking that part in the common work for which it has a special value and authority.

He sends all through the work (and through its reader) a feeling that everything in it is needed by, gives support to and takes support from the rest (is what it is because the rest is what it is),

a feeling which puts things together so that they become no longer (in themselves or in their effects) what they would be if separated, by that uniting power (by which "words become things and things words"),

for which I would keep the word "Imagination."

This power is first moved to its work by conscious purpose and a knowledge of what it is attempting,

and it is kept under the control of purpose and knowledge throughout—a control which does not ever let up or get in the way of the work. The Imagination is seen to be at work through the way in which it makes forces or conditions which, as a rule, are not able to be present together, or are even against one another, give one another room for free play and even get on well together like friends. For example: it makes things able to be the same and at the same time different;

be clear examples of general laws and still be no less fully themselves in every least detail; through it things we have about us for a long time, and become used to, seem new—as if then for the first time seen;

a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order;

judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement;

and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial,  
still subordinates art to nature;

the manner to the matter;

and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry.

(a) feelings become stronger and freer than in most of our living, though their behavior to one another is better;

(b) the mind is like a self-ruling, well-ruled state;

the purpose and the ways to it are ever kept in view and the self keeps itself unmoved however high or deep or strong the waves of feeling may be;

and while it lets in no line of division between what is natural and what is made by art, still keeps the writer's design from becoming anything more than the servant of natural forces;

makes "how a thing is said" be ruled by "what has to be said";

and puts our interest—our answering note to the *poetry*—before our respect for or questions about the man who made it.

Drafting a Basic version, or even studying one, does at least give us an exceptional opportunity to ask ourselves persistently not only what such a passage as this last is saying but how far what it says is true. With paragraphs that are trying to display the very springs of a man's nature and the sources of his highest powers, these questions are worth all the trouble they entail.

After such dissections and analyses the words of the philosopher who perhaps more than anyone else taught traditional China how to think may seem in place. Mencius said, "Extensively learn and describe in detail—to come back and state simply!" And again, "Words near, meaning far, good words: kept simple, widely applied, good principle."<sup>4</sup>

And now, with this much on *the poet* before us let us listen to another poet, William Empson (author of *Seven Types of Ambiguity* and *The Gathering Storm*) talking on the radio in Basic on "Basic and Poetry." His talk was given over WRUL in 1940 and later printed in *The Kenyon Review*, Autumn, 1940.

"It is a little hard to keep Basic and Poetry separate from Basic and Education; because

<sup>4</sup> See I. A. Richards, *Mencius on the Mind*, Harcourt, Brace, 1932, pp. 37, 39.

naturally no one says that keeping within the Basic words all the time would be a good way of writing poetry. But happily not all our education goes on at school, and some knowledge of the ideas of the Basic system, of the sort of way in which Basic gets a complex idea broken up into its parts, may be a help even to a good reader. It lets him get more grip on what he is reading. That at least is the belief which I am putting forward today, and if it seems to you very foolish and improbable at first, it would be kind of you, in place of judging against this talk at the start, to keep in mind that the test is in the examples, which come later.

"But first, why did I say that keeping within the Basic words would not make good poetry? Chiefly because the great trick of poetry, the reason, you might say, for writing in verse at all, is that it lets the writer get his thought crushed into a small space. Then it is like gunpowder, if the trick is done well; the thought comes bursting into the reader's mind. But this is not the only way of writing poetry, or if it is, then the trick may be done with very simple words. We will take an example of Wordsworth doing that. Probably Wordsworth would be pleased with this bit of the argument; because it was his chief opinion that poetry had

better be made out of 'the simple language of man,' though he made good poetry out of hard words as well.

*The sea was laughing at a distance, all  
The solid mountains were as bright as clouds*

That is Wordsworth, and in Basic, and good poetry; we will come back to it later on. You might get an idea that the Basic words are dead and uninteresting, because they are so simple; that all the bright and living English words are outside the list. This is clearly not true in the two lines from Wordsworth; they may be simple, but there is nothing 'dead' about them.

"Or you might say that is not possible to have poetry without verbs. That is, complex verbs, not like the Basic *put* and *take* and so on. Because full verbs give force, and colour, and song, and the taste of the living minute, and all that sort of thing. Well, it is true that the thought is less crushed together in Basic, and being crushed together is a help for poetry, so no doubt it is true that poetry has a need for complex verbs. What is not true is that there is anything feeble or dead about *put* and *take*. Here is Swinburne writing about the place where dead men go to, and about Persephone, Daughter of Earth, Ruler of the Shades, the being under whose authority they go. She is Death as well as Daughter of Earth, because though the summer is fertile (and the earth is fertile) still the winter comes after it (and the winter is death). I will give the rough sense in Basic first.

She is waiting for everyone. She is waiting for every man from his birth on. She has let out of her memory the earth who was her mother, and the way of living when fruit and grain are coming to their growth. And the spring, and the seeds, and the birds who go away in winter, all take wing for her, and go one after another to this place where the sound of the songs made in summer becomes hollow, and the flowers are laughed at because they were beautiful.

*She waits for each and other,  
She waits for all men born,  
Forgets the earth her mother,  
The life of fruits and corn,  
And spring and seeds and swallow  
Take wing for her and follow,  
Where summer song rings hollow  
And flowers are put to scorn.*

"Now one thing is quite clear. It is no use your saying that *take wing for her* and *put to scorn*, in this verse, have only got the feeble little verbs *put* and *take*, so they are feeble. They are very strong, they come out of the lines like the right arm. In fact, they are kept back for the places where most force is needed. It is they which make the smash at the end. That does not say that the Basic verbs are the best ones for poetry *all the time*. But it is sometimes said that there is necessarily a dead feeling about the verbs in Basic, and it seems a good thing to give an answer.

"Still, our use of Basic here is not for writing poetry, but for getting the effect of normal poetry clear. So let us take a look at the effect of putting the lines into Basic. There are two points of interest. *Life* seems quite clear at first — 'the life of fruits and corn' — but putting this into Basic has a strange effect. The word is not in the Basic list, and you have to say to yourself, What life? What sort of life of a fruit is in question here? And then it becomes clear that Swinburne has in mind summer, as the time of growth of the fruit, and the feelings that we have in summer as the opposite to winter and death. In fact, without this connection the lines have no sense. The swallow is not going to its death when it goes south from England at the start of the winter. It only comes into the verse as one of the signs that winter is coming, and because winter is used in the verse as a sign of death. The swallow goes with desire and hope to a warmer country. But men in the end, so the later verses say, get a desire for death and go to it quickly, as the swallow goes south away from winter. Now this is a simple enough bit of poetry, as poetry goes. But it is quite possible for a reader not to get all this system of comparisons working at the

back of it. And then turning the poetry into Basic is a help, because it makes you put the right questions.

"The other point is maybe of more interest to writers in Basic than to poetry readers. *Scorn* is not in the list, and to give the sense of this verse in Basic you have to get round 'put to scorn.' But it is not possible to give the 'sense' without giving the right suggestion, because the connections of thought, in this sort of poetry, are in the suggestions, and seem to be only feelings. It is no good saying that the flowers are made to seem feeble and unwise, though that is the simplest answer. Or even that they are laughed at cruelly, though that is much better, because it puts our attention onto Persephone, who is cruel. The idea, or so it seems to me, is that the flowers are laughed at *wrongly*. The more beautiful they were the more pain there would be in death. So the way Persephone is judging them is the opposite to the way they were judged in the summer, by living men and by the fertile earth. What is better up here on earth seems worse to her. So the best way to say 'put to scorn,' it seemed to me, was to put 'laughed at because they were beautiful.' Well, this may be wrong, but you see the line of thought needed. When you make this attempt at turning the sense of a bit of poetry into Basic you will get a feeling that your answer is wrong, at some points. This feeling is a sort of pointer. It is only through our taste about the effects of language that we get our knowledge about its working. In looking for the reason why your first answer was wrong, you are sent on to the important questions about the poetry. So this process makes the structure of the poetry much clearer.

"Let us go back now to the lines by Wordsworth. They are about the morning when Wordsworth first was certain that he had to give himself to writing poetry. It is early in the morning, and Wordsworth is up on the top of a mountain. There is an interesting point here, because Wordsworth made changes in the lines when he was older. So in our Basic account we have another thing to do. This is the first way of writing the lines.

*magnificent*

*The morning was, in memorable pomp,  
More glorious than I ever had beheld.*

*The sea was laughing at a distance, all*

*The solid mountains were as bright as clouds.*

Now an attempt at the sense in Basic. 'The morning seemed strong and beautiful. I had a respect for it, as if it was a king, a ruler, coming out before the eyes of his nation, and with a train of servants round him. It seemed that this would never go out of my memory. The morning was more brightly and clearly beautiful than I had ever seen it before. The sea was laughing at a distance; all the solid mountains were as 'bright as clouds.' Well, that took a great number of words. And one trouble is, in giving all those words for *pomp* we get a detailed picture, not a general idea. *Magnificent* and *glorious* seem all right; we are able to say why they are different; one is strong, the other bright. But there is another trouble here. We have made these three words seem much more different than they were in the poetry. In them all the morning (or the sun) is *making itself seem* great, like the ruler. When we see this we see why they are in that order. First the morning seems strong, maybe like a ruler who is doing great things (*magnificent*); then this gives the idea of the ruler coming out on view (*pomp*). But you are not to have any protest in your mind against rulers and the way they make themselves important. So the morning was truly bright in itself (*glorious*), and the sea was not self-important, it was laughing. There is a sort of pull here between two ideas, that of the authority of the good ruler and the natural good of being free. And the effect is that this beautiful morning is like a sign of some good secret at the back of all experience. As so frequently in Wordsworth, in fact, there is an idea of religion not clearly in view. It seems to me that putting the lines into Basic makes this turn of thought much clearer, for the very reason that Basic is so short of words like *magnificent*. The effect is like taking the cover off a machine.

"The last two lines are not simple, though they are in Basic. You get a strange feeling that

*solid* and *bright* are two opposites coming together.

*The solid mountains were as bright as clouds.*

The mountains are *solid* because they are great hard masses, a cause of danger; commonly they are dark; they have a cruel authority; they have a connection with the sad experiences down here on earth. But now they have given up all that, and they are *bright*, like the clouds in the air. So all the parts of this morning view are working together; they are all a sign of the good secret about everything. And there is the same pull here as before between the ideas of authority and of being free.

"But there is another point here. This surprising connection of ideas, *solid* and *bright*, was there waiting for us before, inside the complex words *magnificent*, *pomp*, and *glorious*. The ruler makes us see his force when he comes out on view; he is solid. But he is a good ruler, and will make us happy; or at any rate his purpose in coming out on view is to give us that feeling. One of the effects of his force, in fact, is that we are now looking at something beautiful, as he goes by in his ornaments, and he does that as a sign that he will make us happy. So he is bright. And all this group of ideas, which may seem very complex, is not one person's invention but the normal feeling in words like *pomp* and *magnificent*. But Wordsworth was taking his idea in the words more seriously. It was his serious belief that the beautiful view was a sign of some much greater good thing. And the way he gives us that feeling is by taking the complex idea in *magnificent* to bits. That is why he is able to give us this shock with the simple Basic words *solid* and *bright*. Because it is not only the reader who has to be able to take an idea to bits. We see here the writer having to do it as well. After starting with an old comparison, of the sun to a ruler, which would have no great effect, he gets a feeling, 'Why is that interesting to me? What is this suggestion it has, of some more important idea?' and so he takes it to bits. The surprise which is so important for poetry comes in his further thought about the comparison, and there he is using simpler ideas. So it is not

quite by chance that the last two lines here are only using words that are in the Basic list.

"But when Wordsworth was older it seemed to him that there was not enough weight in these lines for such an important poet as the older Wordsworth. And he made changes, which take it much further away from Basic. One good judge<sup>5</sup> has said that he made it much better, and maybe you will say the same. These are the new lines:

*magnificent*

*The morning rose, in memorable pomp,  
Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front  
The sea lay laughing at a distance; near,  
The solid mountains shone, bright as the  
clouds.*

The chief changes are in 'the morning *rose*' for 'the morning *was*'; 'the sea *lay* laughing' for 'the sea *was* laughing'; the 'mountains *shone*' for the 'mountains *were*,' and the new words *in front* and *near*. Now certainly this seems tighter verse. There are more facts in it. One writer says that this makes it clearer. For example, it is now clear that the sea was in the middle of the view, in front, and that the mountains were nearer to Wordsworth than the sea was. But here it is time to make a protest against something I was saying before. I said that it was important for poetry to get ideas crushed together. But *what* ideas? Why, after all, is it important for us to get the right picture here? Maybe some readers of the old lines had got the right feeling, though they took the sea to be nearer than the mountains. But now Wordsworth says to them 'You are making a foolish error. In *fact*, at the time when I had this important feeling, the sea was *not* nearer than the mountains.' That is, in the new lines Wordsworth is painting a picture. This is as good a morning as even he, William Wordsworth, has ever seen, and he is giving a clear account of it. You see how cold this makes him; he is an expert on views of mountains. But in the old lines it was his *feelings* about the sea and the mountains and the morning which were important, and the forces

<sup>5</sup> See Sélincourt, preface to *Prelude*. See also *Basic in Teaching East and West*, pp. 99-100.

working in his heart. And that is what is interesting in the lines, if anything is interesting. The idea that pushing in more facts *about the view* makes the lines more interesting is simply an error.

"The other changes are all changes in verbs; he takes out the simple Basic ones and puts in complex verbs. Then it will be better because more ideas will have been pushed in—that is his feeling. The morning *rose*, he says, came up, as if the sun sometimes went down in the morning. This detail seems very little needed. But it makes clear that the time was very early in the morning, and maybe this touch has an effect. What *came up* was the sun, and the change puts your attention onto the sun. Possibly it was only the sun, not the morning in general, who was a ruler and *magnificent*. At any rate the sea *lay* laughing; it was flat on its back. It had no authority against the sun; it was in a feeble position. Taken by itself, the change to *lay* might be a beautiful one, but it has a connection with the others. And then the mountains *shone*; they gave out light. So it is clear that they gave back light from the first rays of the sun, which was then first coming up in the morning. They were not bright in themselves. They were only giving back light from the sun. So the old shock of surprise in *solid* and *bright* has quite gone. There is no secret about the morning. It was the *sun* which was making things bright. This is quite clear now that Wordsworth has given us all the details.

"In fact there are only two important persons now; the sun and Wordsworth. Every one of the changes has been working in this direction. Wordsworth is important because the reader has to get clear the details of what Wordsworth saw. And the sun is important because it is the *cause*, as it is from the point of view of science, of all the details in the picture. But the old effect was a pull between two feelings, between saying that authority is good and saying it is good to be free and open to experience. The weight now has all come down on the side of authority. When Wordsworth was young and in trouble he came back to the mountains and took them as teachers. The poor

mountains are nobody now, but it is pleasing to see a smile from a mountain when Wordsworth or the sun goes past. A good mountain, at such a time, will take its hat off. It is a strange and sad thing, but it probably seemed to Wordsworth, when he made these changes, that he was only giving the lines a bit of polish. What he was doing was more like turning the guns round from firing at the Germans and pointing them against the French."

That is an example of Basic working on different levels at once. Empson can use his "simple English" over the short wave for beginners in the language everywhere (this talk was part of a pioneer World Wide Broadcasting Foundation series) and make of it a dexterous critical instrument as well. He is notably at his ease in Basic. A similar carefree spirit animates Frank Daniels' discursive monologue on John Donne's *Love's Deitie*. Representative and teacher of Basic for a number of years in Japan before the war, compiler of a Japanese Basic Dictionary and a number of translations for the use, of beginners in English, Daniels tries his hand for us at a novel form of interpretation with the little language. Here is the poem.

#### LOVE'S DEITIE

*I long to talke with some old lover's ghost,  
 Who dyed before the god of love was borne:  
 I cannot thinke that hee, who then lov'd most,  
 Sunke so low, as to love one which did scorne.  
 But since this god produc'd a destinie,  
 And that vice-nature, custome, lets it be;  
 I must love her, that loves not mee.*

*Sure, they which made him god, meant not so much,  
 Nor he, in his young godhead practis'd it.  
 But when an even flame two hearts did touch,  
 His office was indulgently to fit  
 Actives to passives, Correspondencie  
 Only his subject was; it cannot bee  
 Love, till I love her, that loves mee.*

*But every moderne god will now extend  
 His vast prerogative, as far as Jove.*

*To rage, to lust, to write to, to commend,  
All is the purlwe of the god of love.  
Oh were wee wak'ned by this Tyrannie  
To ungod this child againe, it could not bee  
I should love her, who loves not mee.*

*Rebell and Atheist too, why murmur I,  
As though I felt the worst that love could  
doe?*

*Love might make me leave loving, or might  
trie*

*A deeper plague, to make her love mee too,  
Which, since she loves before, I am loth to see;  
Falsehood is worse than hate; and that must  
bee,*

*If shee whom I love, should love mee.*

Here is a man talking to himself, in Basic, as he reads the poem. Watch his mind at work and you will find yourself coming to terms more closely with the verses as he ponders them:

The heading over the lines *Love's Deitie*. To be taken which way, "The Power having authority over things of love," or "The highly-to-be-respected quality in Love"?—"Cupid," or "How great and good Love is!"? No answer without reading on. (He gives it, so far, only a "Mesopotamian" reading.)

*I long to talke with some old lover's ghost, /  
Who dyed before the god of Love was borne;* that is to say, "I have a great desire to have a talk with some old" (question: 'old in years,' or 'early, old-time?') "some old lover's shade, *who*" (goes back to 'lover' probably, not 'shade') *who dyed*—(yes, no doubt about it) let's say, "the shade of some old-time lover who came to his end"; or maybe "whose death took place" would be smoother; "before the power in authority over things of love was given birth to"; more shortly, "before Cupid's birth." That's got it roughly, only with such a thin chance of this desire coming true. "I have a great desire" doesn't seem quite right for "I long." Let's say: "I would be very pleased to have a talk with the shade of some old-time lover whose death took place before Cupid's birth."

*I cannot thinke that hee, who then lov'd most, /  
Sunke so low, as to love one which did scorne:* "I am unable to have the thought that he"—very unnatural! "I am very certain that he . . . did not (do something)" would be better. What ever is the sense of *who then lov'd most*?—"who then had the greatest love," or "who then had love for the greatest number of women"? Let's go on, and come back to it later. *That he sunke* (mm, 'sink, sank, sunk'; in present-day English, 'that he sank'): "that he went so low" (not very happy, that!) and 'did not' has to come in, so it's *that he did not sink*; "that he did not make himself so cheap" will do better; "as to be in love with one which" (*one's* certainly a woman, so it would be 'one who' in present-day English); *did scorne*—"did" as in 'did damage' isn't possible, so *did scorne* has to be parallel to 'did say,' 'did see,' simply *scorned*, in fact—"had a poor opinion of"—"him" (no, that isn't getting it quite)—better say, "would have nothing to do with him." Now how does it go?—"I am almost certain that he, who then *lov'd most*—was most in love (?), was in love with the greatest number of women (?)—did not make himself so cheap as to be in love with one who would have nothing to do with him." Still not certain about that *lov'd most*.

*But since this god produc'd a destinie, /  
and that vice-nature, custome, lets it be; / I must love her, that loves not mee.* "But because"—or is it "But now, from the time when"? As much one as the other, possibly. Let's say, "But now, because"; *this god*, "Cupid"; *produc'd a destinie*: "made a destiny come about," and a *destiny's* a 'number of events which necessarily are, and will be, part of one's existence,' or here, not 'one's existence' so much as 'a lover's existence'; so what it comes to is something like, "made it necessary for all lovers to do and undergo certain things."—*and that vice-nature*; *vice* might be 'shocking wrongdoing,' or 'a strong gripping-apparatus,' or—yes, *that vice-nature, custome*—"taking the place of," as in 'vice president,' 'the man who takes the president's place'—"custome, which takes the place of *nature*," "the fact that it is, and has been, generally done, which is as hard

to get free from as a gripping-apparatus"—yes, and even the 'shocking wrongdoing' might be part of it: "*custom*, which is, or is like, *nature* acting wrongly and shockingly"; then *nature* would be more like "the natural order of things." Now, where are we? It certainly seems as if 'taking the place of' has got the best right to be looked on as the sense of *vice*—but the 'strong grip' may come in and somewhere back-stage a voice may be saying, 'wrong and shocking!' *lets it be*: that's clear enough. *I must love her that loves not mee*: "I am forced to be in love with a certain woman who has no love for me." So, putting it all together, we get: "But now, because Cupid made it necessary for all lovers to do and undergo certain things, and the fact that they are, and have been, generally done—a fact that takes the place of natural impulse; a fact that is as hard to get free from as a gripping-apparatus (and possibly the natural order of things is acting wrongly and shockingly when what is generally done has such power)—because of all this, I am forced to be in love with a certain woman who has no love for me."

*Sure, they which made him god, meant not so much, / Nor he, in his young godhead practis'd it.* "It seems certain that those (persons?, higher beings?) who made him a higher being did not have the purpose of letting things go as far as this"—or a little more smoothly, "It seems certain that it was not the purpose of those who made him a higher being to let things go as far as this"—"and that he himself did not go so far in his young days as a higher being"—that is, "in the early part of his time as a higher being," or simply "at first." Maybe 'gave him his power' though would be clearer than 'made him a higher being.' If so, it'd be: "It seems certain that it was not the purpose of those who gave him his power to let things go as far as this, and that he himself did not go so far at first."

*But when an even flame two hearts did touch, / His office was indulgently to fit / Actives to passives.* "But when two hearts were touched by an equal flame (of love)," "But when two persons were equally in love with one another"—*His office was*: "His business

was"; *indulgently*: "so as to let them give way to their desires," "so as to let them have their pleasure"; *to fit Actives to passives*: "to make those who were in love with one another come together when one of them (the *active*) is ready to make the first move, but the other (the *passive*) is not"?

*Correspondencie / Only his subject was; It cannot bee / Love, till I love her, that loves mee.* (*Correspondencie* in present-day English would be *correspondence*.) "Only things in agreement with one another came under his rule," that is, "He had no power over those who were not equally in love with one another"—but there may be another suggestion here: "Connection through some sort of exchange (an old sense of *correspondence*, from which the current sense of 'exchange of letters' has come) was the only thing which his art had to do with; that is, the give and take of love"—*it cannot bee love, till I love her, who loves mee*: this seems to say what the sense of *correspondencie* is—"love which is truly love does not come about till the two are in love with one another." Anyway, the chief sense has to be, roughly, "He had no power over those who were not equally in love with one another: that is to say, one-sided love was not under his rule."

*But every moderne god will now extend / His vast prerogative, as far as Jove:* "But in these days every"—let's say, "ruling power"—"puts his far-ranging rights out"—*as far as Jove*; Jove was the greatest of the higher powers and had control over all things, so the idea seems to be "over everything." Or, to put it differently, "But these days such ruling powers put no limits to their authority."

*To rage, to lust, to write to, to commend, / All is the purluwe of the god of love:* "To be violently worked up, have violent desires, to send letters to the loved one, to say what a high opinion you have of her—all these are in the field which Cupid has rights over." Probably straightforward, though the way to *write to* is cut short is a little strange, and *purluwe* is a word which has bad suggestions. (*The Shorter Oxford Dictionary* gives: '*To hunt in purlieu, in the purlieus, to pursue illicit love.*')

*Oh were wee wak'ned by this Tyrannie / To ungod this child againe, it could not bee / I should love her, who loves not mee:* "If only we were made clear-seeing and ready enough by this cruel rule to take back the power which was given to this boy, it would not be possible for me to be in love with this woman who has no love for me"—or, more freely, "If only the cruel use Cupid makes of his power made us clear about what this power is and how it comes to him, so that we took his power away from him again"—with a suggestion in *child* that he is in fact *childish*, 'baby-like,' 'not rightly to be taken very seriously'—"it would not be possible for me to be in the position of loving this woman who has no love for me."

*Rebell and Atheist too, why murmur I, / As though I felt the worst that love could doe?* "I am (wrongly?) going against my ruler—even worse, against a higher being. (Cupid still is a great power.) Why do I, in this way, make protests, as if I was experiencing the worst things love has it in its power to do?"—and *as though*, 'as if,' gives a strong suggestion of, 'I am not experiencing this, that's certain.' And here's a point: here it's *love*, not *Cupid*, which is doing things; it seems, then, that all through we might take Cupid to be not so much the power in authority over things of love, but the representative of love, or of a certain sort of love, and then this love itself would be like a higher being or ruler.

*Love might make me leave loving, or might trie / A deeper plague, to make her love mee too, / Which, since she loves before, I am loth to see.* "Love might make me give up loving"—How?—"by making me tired of itself, giving me more than enough of itself?" (might be, but doesn't seem very probable) 'by taking me away from my present loving through the attraction of another woman?' (more probable; yes, that's probably it). But *leave loving* might be "go away (while still) loving"—What about that? Yes, quite possible—possible, but less probable, I'd say.—*or might trie a deeper plague, to make her love mee too:* "or might do its best—and this would be even more troubling—to make her . . ." Maybe, but 'try' has the suggestion, 'that would be hard!' *which, since she*

*loves before, I am loth to see:* "and I have no desire to see this (her loving me), because she has an earlier love"—clearly for another man. So, putting the bits together, we've got: "Love might make me give up loving"—or, possibly, "Love might make me go away and give up attempting anything, while still loving"—or "might see what effect something even more troubling would have; that is to say, make her be in love with me, as I am with her; and I have no desire to see this, because she has an earlier love."

*Falsehood is worse than hate; and that must bee, / If shee whom I love, should love mee:* "Being false is worse than hate"—Who is false? Who has hate? Who is being hated?—Oh, not much doubt that it's 'her being false' and 'her hating me,' so let's say, "For her to be false would be worse than for her to go on hating me." But that 'would be' doesn't *quite* get it somehow: from the 'is' you get the feeling that because she's that sort of person anything false would be quite wrong in connection with her. Not important enough to do anything about, though! *and that must bee, if shee whom I love, should love mee.* Well, the *that* has to be *falsehood*; it wouldn't make sense to take it as *hate*: "and for her to be false is what would necessarily take place if the woman I am in love with came to have love for me." Or, putting it all together more smoothly, "For her to be false would be worse than for her to have hate for me, and the woman I am in love with would necessarily be false if she gave me her love."

This has been, as it were, a close-up in slow-motion view of a reader at work on the poem, balancing different ways of getting what he can of it into Basic. As in all such work, the risk is a loss of perspective. The essential theme is the changing idea of love. No more is said, after the first four lines, about the dead lover. He is there to start the oppositions between ways of loving and different orders of lovers, from which the energies of the poem come. As Mr. Sweeney has remarked (*Kenyon Review*, Winter, 1943, pp. 56-57), "Donne is talking about the turn—said to have come at the time of the Troubadours—from the idea of love as an ex-

perience of body and mind uniting the equal desires of lovers, to the idea of a love in which the lover, burning with desire, was forever kept at a distance and the loved one ever said 'no.' " There have been other turns since, and Mr. Eliot's comment on "tradition" is to the point. Ideas of love and fidelity form no small part of human tradition. How love is to be conceived is urgent business always. The more we penetrate into Donne's poem the less will it seem a curiosity out of past time, and the more will the study of "that vice-nature, custom" be recognized as part of our contemporaneity.

In closing this exemplification of some uses of Basic as a tool in interpretation we would like to recur to one sentence in the passage we studied from Whitehead. "It is the business of the future to be dangerous; and it is among the merits of science that it equips the future for its duties." Basic very definitely is an attempt toward equipping the future for its duties. It was devised to take a planned and foreseen place among the sudden enormous expansions of man's powers (and consequent perils) which make our times unique. Never was any language spread abroad as English is being spread by this war. Basic as an international secondary language and as first steps toward fuller English is an attempt to help there—on the linguistic front.

•But moreover, and this is no less important, never before today have so many people been forced to concern themselves with so much. Wide and truly universal education is a new thing. It is the greatest and most audacious experiment of all time. It is an immense adventure in the faith of reason. Whether the strain it will put on human understanding will be too much we do not know. The best educated men of 200 years ago had no more than backyard gardens to care for in comparison with the range of invitations to consider that are offered us. Is it any wonder if complaints that no one knows what he thinks about anything, or why he thinks so, steam up everywhere? This is one of the dangers that science (and the applications of the same sort of study in the humanities) has brought us to, one of

the dangers "that the future will disclose." The equipment needed to meet it includes every device that will help us to ask ourselves what we understand by anything. On this front as well, Basic, we believe, has its place—as an explanatory resource, a focuser of attention.

Basic, too, no doubt, has its dangers. A poor and crude use of it can produce horrible hashes. We are very lucky if we have not here and there inadvertently illustrated these possibilities. But the very horribleness of badly handled Basic versions is a considerable safeguard. Ineptitudes and misconceptions expressed in fuller English are less conspicuous, less self-revealing by far. No one who knows what much "English" restatement is like—in actual present classroom practice—will be very gravely alarmed over the dangers of Basic as an interpretation instrument. In fact it is with relief and new appreciation that the Basic craftsman returns to the artist's work to study again what he cannot convey in his model of the original. Perhaps a recounting of the ingenious old definition of a catalyst might serve to make the point. Here is a Basic version of the little tale:

"A certain Sheik had three sons, good young men of some learning. On his deathbed he sent for them and made a division among them of all he had. One-half of his property he gave to the oldest, one-third to the second and a ninth to the youngest son. And with that his days on earth came to their end.

"But when the sons would make a division of their father's goods they were in great trouble. The Sheik had seventeen camels (long-necked animals of the sand-wastes, which are able to go a long time without water). The three were at a complete loss, till help came to them from a wise old friend of the family. He sent them his only camel to make eighteen. Then the first son took nine of the camels, the second six and the third two, after which they sent back the eighteenth camel to their father's friend. The eighteenth camel was a *catalyst*."

For even if the eighteenth camel didn't make possible an arrival at exactly the division of property laid down by the aged Sheik, the ap-

proximation was as near as could be made. For all practical purposes nine is as close as you can come to half of seventeen living camels. Basic as an interpretation instrument at its best is the eighteenth camel. When it has done its work you put it aside.

Of other dangers—that the simplified language might replace full English, for example—we have said perhaps enough above. To the readers for whom we are writing—those will-

ing to take the trouble to master Basic—these fears will not, we think, count for much. We miss a word here—one that George Chapman, translator of Homer, tried to introduce in 1616. “When a man is understood,” he said, “there is ever a proportion betwixt the writer’s wit and the *writee’s*.” Our writees will know enough about Basic by this time to judge for themselves.



# Appendix



# BASIC ENGLISH WORD LIST

## THINGS

## QUALITIES

400 General			200 Pictured		100 General	50 Opposites
ACCOUNT	EDUCATION	METAL	SENSE	ANGLE	ABLE	AWAKE
ACT	EFFECT	MIDDLE	SERVANT	ANT	ACID	BAD
ADDITION	END	MILK	SEX	APPLE	ANGRY	BENT
ADJUSTMENT	ERROR	MIND	SHADE	ARCH	AUTOMATIC	BITTER
ADVERTISEMENT	EVENT	MINE	SHAKE	ARM	BEAUTIFUL	BLUE
AGREEMENT	EXAMPLE	MINUTE	SHAME	ARMY	BLACK	CERTAIN
AIR	EXCHANGE	MIST	SHOCK	BABY	BOILING	COLD
AMOUNT	EXISTENCE	MONEY	SIDE	BAG	BRIGHT	COMPLETE
AMUSEMENT	EXPANSION	MONTH	SIGN	BALL	BROKEN	CRUEL
ANIMAL	EXPERIENCE	MORNING	SILK	BAND	BROWN	DARK
ANSWER	EXPERT	MOTHER	SILVER	BASIN	CHEAP	DEAD
APPARATUS	FACT	MOTION	SISTER	BASKET	CHEMICAL	DEAR
APPROVAL	FALL	MOUNTAIN	SIZE	BATH	CHIEF	DELICATE
ARGUMENT	FAMILY	MOVE	SKY	BED	CLEAN	DIFFERENT
ART	FATHER	MUSIC	SLEEP	BEE	CLEAR	DIRTY
ATTACK	FEAR	NAME	SLIP	BELL	COMMON	DRY
ATTEMPT	FEELING	NATION	SLOPE	BERRY	COMPLEX	FALSE
ATTENTION	FICTION	NEED	SMASH	BIRD	CONSCIOUS	FEEBLE
ATTRACTION	FIELD	NEWS	SMELL	BLADE	CUT	FEMALE
AUTHORITY	FIGHT	NIGHT	SMILE	BOARD	DEEP	FOOLISH
BACK	FIRE	NOISE	SMOKE	BOAT	DEPENDENT	FUTURE
BALANCE	FLAME	NOTE	SNEEZE	BONE	EARLY	GREEN
BASE	FLIGHT	NUMBER	SNOW	BOOK	ELASTIC	ILL
BEHAVIOR	FLOWER	OBSERVATION	SOAP	BOOT	ELECTRIC	LAST
BELIEF	FOLD	OFFER	SOCIETY	BOTTLE	EQUAL	LATE
BIRTH	FOOD	OIL	SON	BOX	FAT	LEFT
BIT	FORCE	OPERATION	SONG	BOY	FERTILE	LOOSE
BITE	FORM	OPINION	SORT	BRAIN	FIRST	LOUD
BLOOD	FRIEND	ORDER	SOUND	BRAKE	FIXED	LOW
BLOW	FRONT	ORGANIZATION	SOUP	BRANCH	FLAT	MIXED
BODY	FRUIT	ORNAMENT	SPACE	BRICK	FREE	NARROW
BRASS	GLASS	OWNER	STAGE	BRIDGE	FREQUENT	OLD
BREAD	GOLD	PAGE	START	BRUSH	FULL	OPPOSITE
BREATH	GOVERNMENT	PAIN	STATEMENT	BUCKET	GENERAL	PUBLIC
BROTHER	GRAIN	PAINT	STEAM	BULB	GOOD	ROUGH
BUILDING	GRASS	PAPER	STEEL	BUTTON	GREAT	SAD
BURN	GRIP	PART	STEP	CAKE	GREY	SAFE
BURST	GROUP	PASTE	STITCH	CAMERA	HANGING	SECRET
BUSINESS	GROWTH	PAYMENT	STONE	CARD	HAPPY	SHORT
BUTTER	GUIDE	PEACE	STOP	CARRIAGE	HARD	SHUT
CANVAS	HARBOR	PERSON	STORY	CART	HEALTHY	SIMPLE
CARE	HARMONY	PLACE	STRETCH	CAT	HIGH	SLOW
CAUSE	HATE	PLANT	STRUCTURE	CHAIN	HOLLOW	SMALL
CHALK	HEARING	PLAY	SUBSTANCE	CHEESE	IMPORTANT	SOFT
CHANCE	HEAT	PLEASURE	SUGAR	CHEST	KIND	SOLID
CHANGE	HELP	POINT	SUGGESTION	CHIN	LIKE	SPECIAL
CLOTH	HISTORY	POISON	SUMMER	CHURCH	LIVING	STRANGE
COAL	HOLE	POLISH	SUPPORT	CIRCLE	LONG	THIN
COLOR	HOPE	PORTER	SURPRISE	CLOCK	MALE	WHITE
COMFORT	HOUR	POSITION	SWIM	CLOUD	MARRIED	WRONG
COMMITTEE	HUMOR	POWDER	SYSTEM	COAT	MATERIAL	
COMPANY	ICE	POWER	TALK	COLLAR	MEDICAL	
COMPARISON	IDEA	PRICE	TASTE	COMB	MILITARY	
COMPETITION	IMPULSE	PRINT	TAX	CORD	NATURAL	
CONDITION	INCREASE	PROCESS	TEACHING	COW	NECESSARY	
CONNECTION	INDUSTRY	PRODUCE	TENDENCY	CUP	NEW	
CONTROL	INK	PROFIT	TEST	CURTAIN	NORMAL	
COOK	INSECT	PROPERTY	THEORY	CUSHION	OPEN	
COPPER	INSTRUMENT	PROSE	THING	DOG	PARALLEL	
COPY	INSURANCE	PROTEST	THOUGHT	DOOR	PAST	
CORK	INTEREST	PULL	THUNDER	DRAIN	PHYSICAL	
COTTON	INVENTION	PUNISHMENT	TIME	DRAWER	POLITICAL	
COUGH	IRON	PURPOSE	TIN	DRESS	POOR	
COUNTRY	JELLY	PUSH	TOP	DROP	POSSIBLE	
COVER	JOIN	QUALITY	TOUCH	EAR	PRESENT	
CRACK	JOURNEY	QUESTION	TRADE	EGG	PRIVATE	
CREDIT	JUDGE	BAIN	TRANSPORT	ENGINE	PROBABLE	
CRIME	JUMP	RANGE	TRICK	EYE	QUICK	
CRUSH	KICK	RATE	TROUBLE	FACE	QUIET	
CRY	KISS	RAY	TURN	FARM	READY	
CURRENT	KNOWLEDGE	REACTION	TWIST	FEATHER	RED	
CURVE	LAND	READING	UNIT	FINGER	REGULAR	
DAMAGE	LANGUAGE	REASON	USE	FISH	RESPONSIBLE	
DANGER	LAUGH	RECORD	VALUE	FLAG	RIGHT	
DAUGHTER	LAW	REGRET	VERSE	FLOOR	ROUND	
DAY	LEAD	RELATION	VESSEL	FLY	SAME	
DEATH	LEARNING	RELIGION	VIEW	FOOT	SECOND	
DEBT	LEATHER	REPRESENTATIVE	VOICE	FORK	SEPARATE	
DECISION	LETTER	REQUEST	WALK	FOWL	SERIOUS	
DEGREE	LEVEL	RESPECT	WAR	FRAME	SHARP	
DESIGN	LIFT	REST	WASH	GARDEN	SMOOTH	
DESIRE	LIGHT	REWARD	WASTE	GIRL	STICKY	
DESTRUCTION	LIMIT	RYTHM	WATER	GLOVE	STIFF	
DETAIL	LINEN	RICE	WAVE	GOAT	TONGUE	
DEVELOPMENT	LIQUID	RIVER	WAX	GUN	TOOTH	
DIGESTION	LIST	ROAD	WAY	HAIR	TOWN	
DIRECTION	LOOK	ROLL	WEATHER	HAMMER	TRAIN	
DISCOVERY	LOSS	ROOM	WEEK	HAND	TRAY	
DISCUSSION	LOVE	RUB	WEIGHT	HAT	TREE	
DISEASE	MACHINE	RULE	WIND	HEAD	TROUSERS	
DISGUST	MAN	RUN	WINE	HEART	UMBRELLA	
DISTANCE	MANAGER	SALT	WINTER	HOOK	WALL	
DISTRIBUTION	MARK	SAND	WOMAN	HORN	WATCH	
DIVISION	MARKET	SCALE	WOOD	HORSE	WHEEL	
DOUBT	MASS	SCIENCE	WOOL	HOSPITAL	WHIP	
DRINK	MEAL	SEA	WORD	HOUSE	WHISTLE	
DRIVING	MEASURE	SEAT	WORK	ISLAND	WINDOW	
DUST	MEAT	SECRETARY	WOUND	JEWEL	WING	
EARTH	MEETING	SELECTION	WRITING	KETTLE	WIRE	
EDGE	MEMORY	SELF	YEAR	KEY	WORM	

## SUMMARY OF RULES

PLURALS IN 'S.'

DERIVATIVES IN 'ER,' 'ING,' 'ED' FROM 300 NOUNS.

ADVERBS IN 'LY' FROM QUALIFIERS.

DEGREE WITH 'MORE' AND 'MOST.'

QUESTIONS BY INVERSION AND 'DO.'

OPERATORS AND PRONOUNS CONJUGATE IN FULL.

MEASUREMENT, NUMERALS, CURRENCY, CALENDAR, AND INTERNATIONAL TERMS IN ENGLISH FORM.

## International Words <sup>1</sup>

*50 words chosen by committee of experts:*

alcohol	orchestra
aluminum	paraffin
automobile	park
bank	passport
bar	patent
beef	phonograph
beer	piano
calendar	police
check	post
chemist	program
chocolate	propaganda
chorus	radio
cigarette	restaurant
club	sir
coffee	sport
colony	taxi
dance	tea
engineer	telegram (telegraph)
gas	telephone
hotel	terrace
influenza	theater
lava	tobacco
madam	university
nickel	whisky
opera	zinc

*12 names of sciences to be used internationally:* algebra, arithmetic, biology, chemistry, geography, geology, geometry, mathematics, physics, physiology, psychology, zoology.

*12 words to be used where necessary with special names:* college, dominion, embassy, empire, imperial, king, museum, president, prince, princess, queen, royal.

<sup>1</sup> Listed in *The ABC of Basic English*, pp. 169-170.

*50 additional words being tested as international* (these are being used with care for a year or two to test reactions):

ammonia	olive
asbestos	omelette
autobus	opium
ballet	pajamas
café	paradise
catarrh	penguin
champagne	platinum
chauffeur	potash
circus	pyramid
citron	quinine
cocktail	radium
cognac	referendum
dynamite	rheumatism
encyclopedia	rum
glycerin	salad
hyena	sardine
hygiene	tapioca
hysteria	toast
inferno	torpedo
jazz	vanilla
liqueur	violin
macaroni	visa
malaria	vodka
mania	volt
nicotine	zebra

*Place names to be kept to native form except where English spelling has been generally adopted in full English, e.g. Germany, Rome.*

*Measuring words*

*Number words*

*Words in money systems of different countries to be used in their English form*

*Days and months of year in English form*

## Lists of Words for Special Fields

The general science list has two chief purposes (see *Basic for Science*, pp. 35, 36):

1. It gives names for certain general words frequently used in science—names of processes, conditions, and so on, which put common ideas in the various sciences in a short, familiar form.

2. It takes in words that are common to two or more sciences, which would otherwise have to be repeated on different special lists.

A list of *International Science Words* for the use of experts in special fields is given on pp. 307–313 of *Basic for Science*. This consists of science nouns and adjectives “to some degree current, with unimportant changes of form, in at least the six chief languages of Europe—English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Russian” (with the exception of a few that are not in the Russian language). It includes such

words as *anesthetic* and *bomb*, *electricity*, *magnetic* and *organism*, *petroleum*, *turbine*, *thermometer*, *microscope*, *neuron*, *serum* and *vitamin*, in addition to less familiar terms like *allotropy*, *endothelium*, *haemoeyanin*, *isomorphism*, *phylogeny*, and *tropism*.

*The General Basic Science Dictionary* shortly to be published gives Basic definitions for all the special English words used in the chief branches of science. See *Basic for Science*, pp. 61–64 and 263–271 for detail. Pages 272–306 of that text give Basic explanations of all the words in the Basic science lists in the senses in which the special sciences use them. For example: “*metabolism* (Biol.) n. The chemical changes in living substance by which a living body is kept going; the process of the build-up and destruction of living substance all the time going on in the body.”

### *The General Science List*

absorption	disturbance	melt	specialization
age	elimination	mixture	specimen
application	environment	nucleus	stimulus
arc	equation	origin	strain
area	evaporation	path	strength
arrangement	experiment	pressure	stress
ash	explanation.	projection	substitution
axis	focus	proof	supply
break	friction	reference	surface
bubble	fusion	reproduction	swelling
capacity	generation	resistance	thickness
case	groove	rigidity	thrust
cell	guard	rock	tide
column	hinge	rot	transmission
component	impurity	rotation	tube
compound	individual	screen	valve
cross	interpretation	seal	active
decrease	investigation	section	adjacent
deficiency	joint	sensitivity	alternate
deposit	latitude	shadow	continuous
determining	layer	shear	direct
difference	length	shell	exact
difficulty	link	similarity	relative
disappearance	longitude	solution	successive
discharge	mean	spark	transparent

## Special Lists

### *Physics-Chemistry*

adsorption	dilution	oxidation	suspension
beaker	dissipation	particle	switch
buoyancy	explosion	pendulum	tongs
charge	flask	plug	trap
circuit	fume	porcelain	valency
clip	funnel	radiation	vapor
coil	furnace	reagent	vortex
collision	grating	receiver	wedge
combination	image	reflux	
conductor	insulator	repulsion	reversible
conservation	lag	residue	saturated
corrosion	lens	solvent	stable
density	medium	stream	

### *Geology*

birefringence	fan	interpenetration	shore
cast	fault	intrusion	sill
cave	flint	lake	slate
clay	flood	limestone	strike
cleavage	flow	mud	texture
contour	foliation	ore	twin
desert	fracture	outcrop	unconformity
dike	glacier	outlier	valley
dip	gravel	overlap	
drift	ground	plain	accessory
erosion	hill	scarp	igneous
eruption	inclusion	schist	sedimentary
extinction	intercept	shale	

### *Mathematics and Mechanics*

acceleration	intersection	projectile	triangle
amplitude	lever	pulley	unknown
approximation	load	quantity	variable
circumference	locus	quotient	velocity
constant	magnitude	ratio	volume
cusp	momentum	reciprocal	
damping	multiple	rectangle	arbitrary
denominator	multiplication	reinforcement	congruent
diameter	node	resolution	inverse
divisor	numerator	subtraction	oblique
fraction	piston	sum	prime
finity	probability	term	recurring
teger	product	total	

*Biology*

abdomen	fertilizing	lung	stalk
appendage	fiber	metabolism	stamen
bark	fin	parent	sucker
beak	germinating	petal	thorax
bud	gill	pollen	tissue
cartilage	gland	sac	
cavity	hoof	scale	degenerate
claw	host	secretion	fresh
climber	inheritance	sepal	mature
creeper	jaw	skull	vascular
domesticating	juice	slide	vestigial
duct	kidney	soil	wild
ferment	liver	stain	

*Business*

acceptance	charge	export	partner
address	claim	gross	purchase
agency	client	guarantee	reference
allowance	code	hire	retail
assets	complaint	hold	sale
assistant	consignment	import	sample
average	cost	investment	show
bale	court	liability	sight
bankrupt	customs	license	strike
barrel	debit	load	supply
bill	deck	loan	wholesale
broker	defect	packing	
certificate	delivery	pair	

*Economics*

accident	deflation	inflation	sale
arbitration	demand	investment	saving
asset	deposit	liability	security
average	discount	loan	service
bill	efficiency	margin	share
broker	effort	monopoly	speculation
budget	employer	partner	statistics
circulation	experiment	pension	stimulus
combine	factor	plan	strike
consumer	fatigue	population	supply
conversion	guarantee	purchase	wholesale
correlation	habit	rent	
cost	index	retail	

*Verse*

angel	fountain	passion	tower
arrow	fox	perfume	travel
beast	glory	pity	valley
bow	God	pool	veil
breast	grace	praise	vine
bride	grape	prayer	violet
brow	grief	pride	virtue
bud	guest	priest	vision
child	hawk	rapture	wandering
cross	heaven	raven	wealth
crown	hell	robe	weariness
curse	hill	rock	weeping
dawn	honey	rose	wisdom
delight	honor	rush	wolf
dew	image	search	wonder
dove	ivory	shower	
dream	joy	sorrow	blind
eagle	lamb	soul	calm
evening	lark	spear	eternal
evil	life	spirit	fair
faith	lion	storm	gentle
fate	lord	stream	glad
feast	meadow	strength	holy
flock	melody	sword	noble
flow	mercy	thief	purple
			shining

*Bible*

altar	envy	neighbor	scribe
ark	flesh	oath	sin
ass	forgiveness	ox	spice
ax	generation	people	tent
baptism	herd	pillar	testament
blessing	heritage	preaching	thorn
captain	husband	prophet	widow
cattle	kingdom	revelation	wife
circumcision	leaven	righteousness	witness
cock	leper	saint	world
deceit	locust	salvation	worship
disciple	master	savior	wrath
			yoke

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